READ PERSPECTIVES

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– Mark Connelly
– Ann Goldberg

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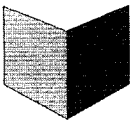

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INTRODUCTION

The past year has seen a definite upsurge in the possibility for bilingual education reform across the country, growing out of newly published research studies and a grass roots trend towards program change. These developments are reflected in the three studies that are reviewed in the current volume of *READ Perspectives*, Vol. II, No. 2, the New York City Public Schools' Longitudinal Study, the American Legislative Exchange Council's report on the cost of bilingual education in the U.S., and the descriptive analysis of the Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Area School District's English Acquisition Program.

THE NEW YORK CITY STUDY

When the Board of Education of the City of New York published *Educational Progress of Students in Bilingual and ESL Programs: A Longitudinal Study, 1990-1994* in October, 1994, the predictable outcry of the advocates for native language teaching programs was instantly heard, but it appears to be having almost no effect in overcoming the negative results of the report. The New York City study is of immense importance for these reasons: it examines student achievement in English-language learning, reading and math in a large, urban school district; it compares students in the same district enrolled in two basically different programs; and it charts student progress over a period of years. At a time when New York City is spending $300 million a year (1993) on bilingual programs, there is an urgent need to know whether the years of native language teaching in Spanish, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Russian, Korean, Vietnamese, French, Greek, Arabic and Bengali have resulted in better student performance than the English immersion approach.

The two groups of LEP students whose achievement was monitored in the New York study are 1) Spanish speakers and speakers of Haitian Creole who were enrolled in bilingual classrooms where they receive mostly native language instruction in reading, writing and school subjects, with brief English language lessons, and 2) students from Russian, Korean and Chinese language backgrounds who were placed in English immersion classes where all instruction is provided through a special English language curriculum.

Barbara Mujica's review provides the necessary analysis of the statistical data and its significance in straightforward prose that is accessible to the educator, policy maker, and concerned citizen. It is worth highlighting here the most important points of the New York study. "At all grade levels, students served in ESL-only programs

exited their programs faster than those served in bilingual programs." (NY Study, ii) There is strong evidence in this study that the earlier a second language is introduced, the more rapidly it is learned for academic purposes--not surprising, but this flies in the face of the received wisdom of bilingual education theory. Apparently, with appropriate teaching, children can learn a new language quickly and can learn subject matter taught in that language. Reading and writing skills can be mastered and math can be learned successfully in a second language and the proof is in the performance of New York City school children, as was also the case in the El Paso report published by The READ Institute in 1992.

Critics of the study, including Luis O. Reyes of the New York City School Board, allege that Korean, Russian and Chinese background students are from middle class families and that the social class differences invalidate the study. (Krashen, 1995) It is true that socioeconomic data is not reported, but we should not make unwarranted assumptions as to how many or which of the children in the study are from poor, working or middle class families. One could reasonably surmise that most immigrant, migrant and refugee children attending the New York City Public Schools do not come from affluent families. The reality is that children from Spanish- and Haitian Creole-speaking families are routinely funneled into bilingual classrooms and children from the other language groups are mostly assigned to English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms. I firmly believe that Haitian and Latino children would succeed in mastering English language skills better and faster and, therefore, join their English-speaking peers in mainstream classes much sooner than is now the case if they were given the same opportunity given to Russian, Korean, and Chinese students.

THE ALEC STUDY ON THE COST OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN THE U.S.

The American Legislative Exchange Council's *Report Card on American Education 1994* includes a special supplement on the cost of bilingual education, which is reviewed by Marsha Youngblood. The ALEC study makes a bold attempt to unravel the mysteries of exactly how many students are served by special programs that aim to remove the language barrier to an equal education, what kinds of programs they are enrolled in, which states these students are concentrated in, and how much is actually being spent in this special effort.

Youngblood correctly points out the flaws in the study and warns that the cost figures may be an over- or under-estimation of what is actually spent, but she reaches these main conclusions: both federal and state agencies give preference to native language teaching programs over ESL programs in funding decisions by a wide margin even though "there is no conclusive research that demonstrates the educa-

tional superiority of bilingual education over ESL" (ALEC, 3); and there is a widespread lack of accountability in bilingual education across the country. The ALEC report shows that the heavy investment in mainly bilingual programs for the past 27 years has not produced exact data on how much these programs cost or how successful they are in realizing their goals in student achievement.

Though cost alone should not be the determining factor in deciding on special language programs for LEP students, analyses of cost benefits inevitably do affect education policy decisions. In both the El Paso and New York City longitudinal studies, students in the structured immersion, English-language programs met program goals in 2-4 years and were able to work in regular classrooms without special help, while students in the traditional bilingual classrooms needed 6-7 years to reach the same level of skills for mainstreaming. Although neither study set out to study costs, it is clear that the expense of giving large numbers of students extra services for 2-4 additional years would be formidable. The ALEC study, whatever its shortcomings, does provide a foundation of useful data and makes a few promising recommendations on data collection and accountability for the education establishment.

THE BETHLEHEM, PENNSYLVANIA, SCHOOL DISTRICT'S ENGLISH ACQUISITION PROGRAM

The Bethlehem study is published here in a densely detailed format in response to the numerous requests that The READ Institute has received from school administrators, teachers, and school board members for practical information on how to develop and evaluate a program for limited-English students that does not rely on native language teaching. Typically, the request has come from educators who have been responsible for special programs that, after intensive efforts and expenditures for a dozen or so years, are not producing good results for LEP students. Administrators want to know just how to go about transforming a failing program where LEP students are languishing, segregated by language, for half a dozen or more years into a second language acquisition program that will produce rapid, effective English language skills for academic purposes; how to monitor student achievement to demonstrate whether the new program is effective or not; what staff development is needed for specialists and for regular classroom teachers; which teaching strategies/texts work best with different age groups and ability levels; and, not incidentally, what is legally acceptable under federal, state and civil rights law.

The Bethlehem study provides a detailed blueprint for fundamental change, for the wholesale transformation from a Transitional Bilingual Program in which almost all instruction is in Spanish for several years to an English Acquisition Program that

rests on the elements of structured immersion. How the change was initiated by the school superintendent, promoted in the Latino community and among school staff, and developed by a well-focused committee of school professionals, is ably reported by the authors of this study, Judy Simons-Turner, Mark Connelly and Ann Goldberg. The new program began in September 1993 and the Bethlehem Board of School Directors stated the goal of this program is "to have all limited-English-proficient students become fluent in English in the shortest amount of time so that they may experience maximum success in school." (Bethlehem, 1993) Turner, Connelly and Goldberg report on the major changes effected in these first two years in school restructuring, integration of LEP students with their English-speaking peers in neighborhood schools, curriculum modifications, teacher training, and revisions in assessment procedures. They gathered data on perceptions of the English Acquisition Program and attitudes towards its implementation in two surveys conducted at the end of the first year among school teachers and administrators and among the parents of the limited-English students. They also describe data from classroom observations and make recommendations for improvements to be introduced over the next several years.

The Bethlehem study does not yet cite statistical data on student achievement, aside from a progress report on the promotion of students from one English-language skill level to another. The authors delineate the evaluations being conducted, noting that the school district is committed to collecting data for a number of years to come. In order for Bethlehem to substantiate any claims of success, it should be able to show, over time, that the English Acquisition Program results in students' exiting more rapidly to the mainstream, that referrals to Special Education or other remedial programs does not increase for LEP students, that school dropout rates for these students decrease and high school graduation rates increase, and that these results are superior to what was reported for the bilingual program that was in effect for the ten years prior to 1993. This information is of crucial importance to other school districts across the country and *READ Perspectives* expects to provide an annual update on student achievement in the Bethlehem English Acquisition Program.

The READ Institute, with the current publication, continues to pursue its twin goals of providing reviews of relevant research in a useful form and giving educators practical guidelines for program development and evaluation.

Rosalie Pedalino Porter, Ed.D.
Editor, *READ Perspectives*

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FINDINGS OF THE NEW YORK CITY LONGITUDINAL STUDY: HARD EVIDENCE ON BILINGUAL AND ESL PROGRAMS

Barbara Mujica, Ph.D.

One of the first long-range, objective studies of the progress of Limited-English Proficient (LEP) students in a large metropolitan school district confirms what experienced language teachers--and everyone else with a modicum of common sense--has known all along: You cannot make students proficient in English by teaching them in another language. *Educational Progress of Students in Bilingual and ESL Programs: A Longitudinal Study, 1990-1994,* published in October, 1994 by the New York City Board of Education, contains disconcerting evidence that programs for LEP students, on which New York State spends over a billion dollars annually, have failed. (ALEC 7) According to the report, most students in bilingual education classes do not become sufficiently fluent in English after three years to be mainstreamed--that is, integrated into regular classrooms in which English is the language of instruction.

SCOPE AND NATURE OF THE STUDY

The New York City study evaluates the progress of LEP students who entered the system during the 1990-1991 school year, focusing not only on the time required to exit LEP programs, but also on the reading and mathematics achievement of students who move on to monolingual English classes. Students in New York City are eligible for bilingual or ESL programs if they score below the 40th percentile on the Language Assessment Battery (LAB), an English proficiency test developed and normed on the New York City LEP school population, and if they speak a foreign language at home. They exit these programs when they score above the 40th percentile on the LAB test, which is administered during the spring semester of each school year. The evaluation process is itself suspect, since on a bell curve, a certain number of students will always fall below the 40th percentile. Even if all the stu-

dents tested were fluent in English, a percentage would always place at the lower end of the spectrum. Thus, the test is designed to keep LEP classes full.

New York State law stipulates that LEP students may remain in special programs no longer than three years. However, those who fail to achieve an acceptable score on the LAB test within that period of time may receive an extension from the Commissioner of Education in Albany. The longitudinal study shows that only a third of LEP students actually are mainstreamed after three years, and even after four years of special instruction, nearly half of those LEP students who entered the system in first grade did not know enough English to join regular classes.

New York City employs two methods to teach LEP students. Bilingual education uses the student's native language for content instruction. This means that students spend most of the day in classes taught in their native language. The rationale behind teaching children primarily in their native language is to allow them to master course work so they will not fall behind grade level and will graduate with their age group. ESL (English as a Second Language) teaches students using controlled English and a special curriculum aimed at the rapid acquisition of English. In ESL classes students are not simply immersed in an English-language classroom and subjected to a barrage of unfamiliar sounds; instead, they are taught by a specially trained instructor who uses "controlled" or limited English to introduce new aspects of the language systematically. The native language, if used at all, is limited to helping the child adjust socially and to communicating with the parents. The Longitudinal Study demonstrates that students who receive ESL instruction fare far better than those who are taught primarily in their native language.

Surprisingly, New York City spends vastly more on bilingual education than on ESL, a phenomenon that reflects national tendencies. In the United States we are currently spending over $12 billion annually to educate LEP students, most of which is spent on native-language based bilingual programs. We spend less than half on ESL programs than we do on bilingual instruction. (ALEC 8)

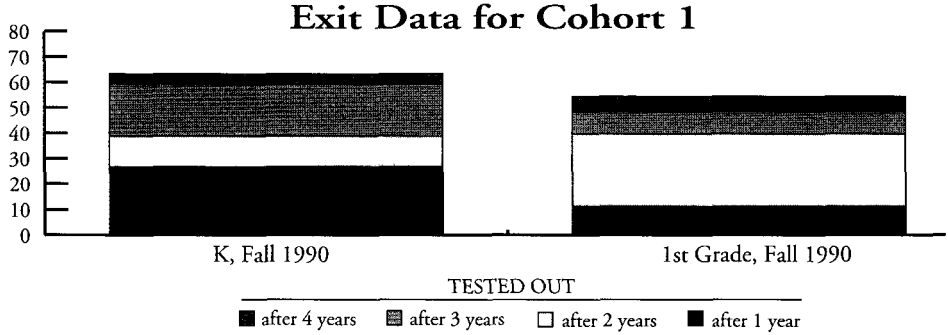
The New York City study tracks two cohorts, the first consisting of students who entered kindergarten and grade 1 in fall, 1990, and the second consisting of students entering grades 2, 3, 6, and 9 in 1991. These grade levels were chosen to comprise Cohort 2 because they "represent critical points in children's development." (Longitudinal Study [LS] I) The study reports on the progress of these groups through June, 1994; thus, it includes four years of data on Cohort 1 and three years of data on Cohort 2.

FINDINGS

The research shows that LEP students who begin special instruction early on in their school careers qualify for mainstreaming faster than those who enter in the later grades. Nevertheless, the statistics even for children who began special programs in kindergarten are cause for alarm. Of the 11,320 LEP students who entered kindergarten in fall, 1990, 36.7 percent--over a third--were still "entitled," i.e., needed to be in a special program, after *four* years. After a fairly successful initial success rate--26.8 percent tested out after one year--the percentages decline. The second group comprising Cohort 1 shows an even lower rate of success. Of the 2,053 children who entered first grade in 1990, 45.6 percent were still entitled after *four* years. Exit rates are shown in the chart below.

Of the students who entered LEP programs in kindergarten
- 26.8% exited after 1 year
- 12% exited after 2 years
- 20.6% exited after 3 years
- 3.9% exited after 4 years

Of the students who entered LEP programs in first grade
- 11.3% exited after 1 year
- 28.3% exited after 2 years
- 8.6% exited after 3 years
- 6.1% exited after 4 years



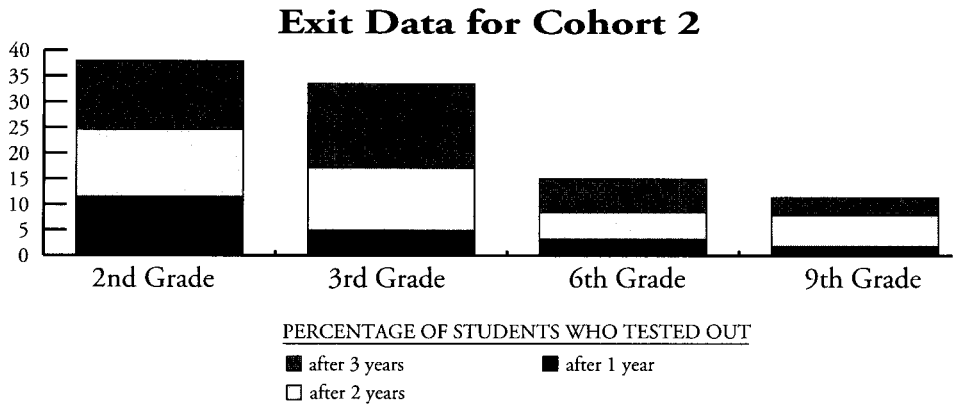
Research on the second cohort provides information only on students' progress over a three-year, rather than a four-year period. Nevertheless, statistics provided by the Longitudinal Study lead to the same gloomy conclusions as those on Cohort 1. Exit data for the four grades evaluated is shown in the chart below.

Of those who entered in the second grade
- 11.5% exited after 1 year
- 13.1% exited after 2 years
- 13.3% exited after 3 years

Of those who entered in the third grade
- 4.9% exited after 1 year
- 12.3% exited after 2 years
- 16.3% exited after 3 years

Of those who entered in the sixth grade
- 3.2% exited after 1 year
- 5.3% exited after 2 years
- 6.5% exited after 3 years

Of those who entered in the ninth grade
- 1.8% exited after 1 year
- 6.1% exited after 2 years
- 3.5% exited after 3 years



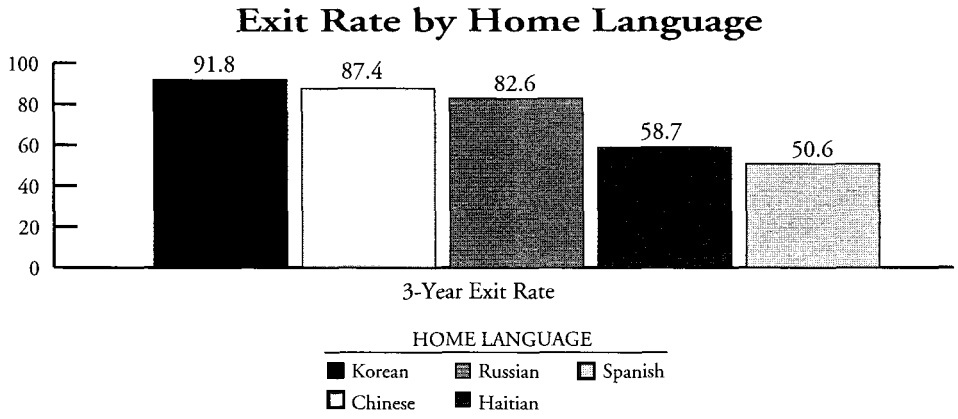
The data reveal that after three years, 62.1 percent of the 841 students who began bilingual or ESL programs in the second grade still had not mastered English well enough to be mainstreamed. Of the 797 children who began special instruction in the third grade, 66.5 percent were still ineligible for mainstreaming after three years. For the groups of 754 and 1,366 students who entered the system in the sixth and ninth grades respectively, the success rate was dismal. In the case of the sixth-graders, 85 percent had failed to qualify for mainstreaming after three years of special classes. In the case of the ninth-graders, a whopping 88.6 percent were not proficient in English after three years. As shown by the rising percentage of students who failed to exit the program after three years, the later students enter the system, the less their chance of ever becoming eligible to join regular classes. In fact, students who begin special instruction in high school (ninth grade) have less than a 12 percent chance of achieving English proficiency. Furthermore, the longer they stay in bilingual or ESL programs, the less chance they have of becoming functional in English, although, as shown later on in this article, the success rate for students who receive ESL instruction is significantly higher than for those who receive bilingual instruction.

These statistics suggest that in order for bilingual or ESL instruction to succeed, it must begin early. However, factors besides the classroom experience may come into play here. It is possible that very young children are more receptive than their older schoolmates to other forces. They are perhaps more willing to form friendships with English-speaking students outside their ethnic group and less self-conscious about trying new sounds or making errors in the target language. Adolescents are not only notoriously self-conscious, but are also often reluctant to separate from their clique. This would make it difficult for older non-English-speaking children to forge relationships with their English-speaking peers--especially when they are isolated from the English-speaking student body by special LEP classes. New York has established special schools for immigrant children, exacerbating the problem of isolation from the general student population.

ESL AND BILINGUAL SUCCESS RATES COMPARED

Although the Longitudinal Study reveals the general failure of special instruction for LEP students to produce youngsters who are proficient in English, it also provides information regarding certain areas of relative success. Two pertinent pieces of data emerge from the study. The first is that some ethnic groups do indeed achieve high exit rates after three years. The other is that students in ESL-only programs fare far better than those in bilingual programs. (The authors specify ESL-only because bilingual programs also include an English-instruction component; students are taught all subjects other than English as a second language in their native tongues.) In fact, even when the statistics are adjusted to take into account students' level of English proficiency upon entering the program, the study shows that children in ESL-only programs qualify for mainstreaming faster than those in bilingual programs. (LS 38-43)

The statistics show significant disparity between the exit rates of LEP students whose home language is Spanish or Haitian Creole and those of other groups. Students from Korean-, Chinese- and Russian-speaking backgrounds were able to learn enough English to exit bilingual and ESL programs faster than those whose languages were Spanish or Haitian Creole. The three-year exit rates for the groups studied are shown in the chart below.

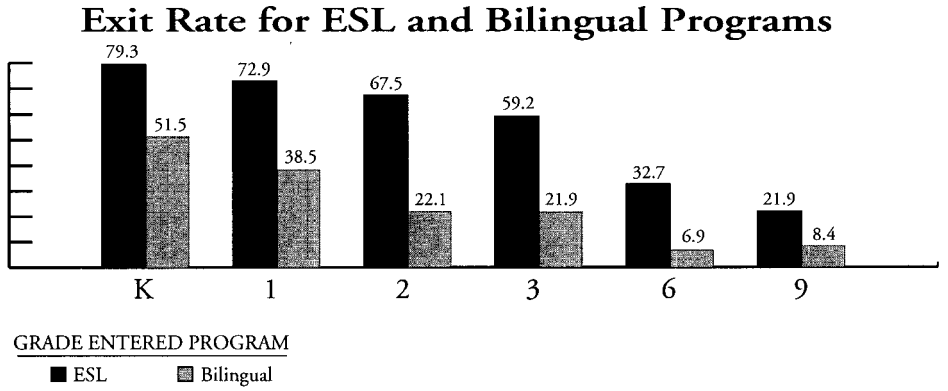


According to the report, "The three-year exit rates were lower for students entering at high grade levels, but the differences among language groups were still observed." (LS ix) Although the report does not provide percentages specifying which students were in what kinds of programs, it does include the information that Spanish- and Haitian Creole-speaking students were usually placed in bilingual programs, while other LEP children were most often placed in ESL-only programs. The data on ethnic groups supports the conclusion derived from other areas of the Longitudinal Study that ESL is a far more effective method for teaching LEP children than bilingual education.

In a phone conversation with Lillian Hernández, Executive Director of Bilingual and ESL Programs for the New York City Public Schools, I asked what percentage of the LEP teachers spoke Korean, Russian, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Spanish or other languages. She told me that this information was not available and would be hard to glean, since many teachers were qualified to teach in more than one language. However, the fact that Korean, Russian, and Chinese children are usually placed in ESL-only classes, while Haitian Creole- and Spanish-speaking children are usually placed in bilingual classes, suggests that far more teachers are available to teach the latter two groups, a factor whose political significance will be discussed below.

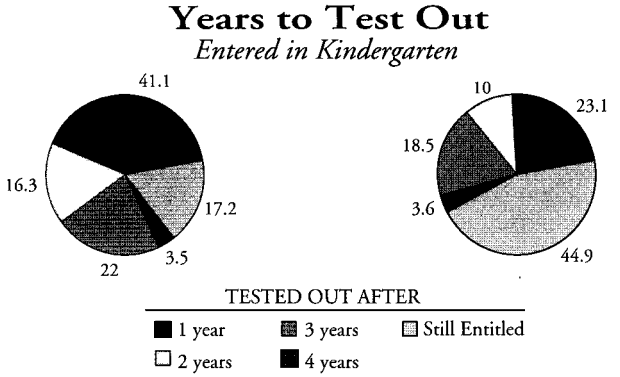
The Longitudinal Report also considers the level of proficiency in English of LEP students at the point at which they enter ESL and bilingual programs and concludes that the "proportion of students testing out of the programs increased with the students' entering level of English competence" (as measured by percentile rank on the LAB). (LS 24) This held true for all grade levels studied and for students in both ESL-only and bilingual programs. The data show that no matter what the student's level of proficiency upon entering the system, "exit rates were higher for ESL-only than for bilingual programs." (LS 24)

In addition, the study compares the three-year exit rates for students in ESL-only and bilingual programs. The authors conclude that, "Regardless of the grade entered, students enrolled in ESL-only classes tested out of the programs faster than students in bilingual programs." (LS 15) The exit rates for ESL-only and bilingual programs are compared in the chart below.

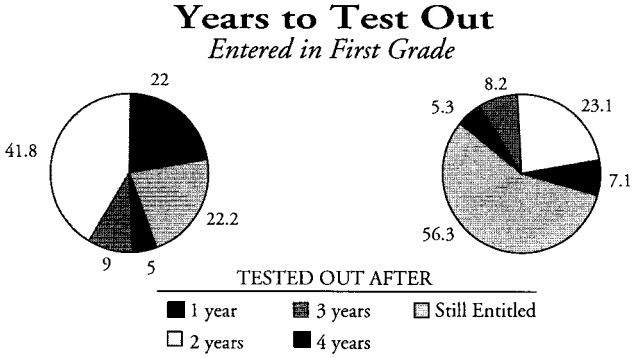


Children in ESL programs not only tested out in larger percentages, they tested out more quickly. The charts below show how long it took each group to test out of ESL-only and bilingual programs. The pie to the left shows the exit rates for children in ESL-only programs. The pie to the right shows the exit rates for children

in bilingual programs. Clearly, those in ESL-only programs not only succeeded at a higher rate than their peers in bilingual programs, but achieved English proficiency far more quickly.



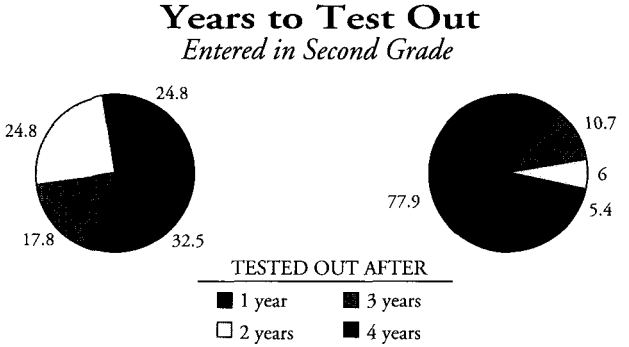
As the age of entry into LEP programs increases, the discrepancy between the groups receiving ESL-only and bilingual instruction becomes more dramatic. The chart below shows the exit rates for ESL-only and bilingual programs for children who entered in the first grade. The pie on the left contains data on ESL programs; the pie on the right, on bilingual programs.



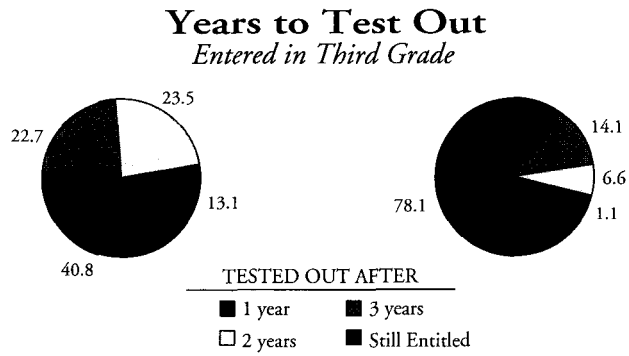
For both those who entered as kindergartners and those who entered in the first grade, the rate of success for children in ESL-only programs was more than double that of children in bilingual education programs.

Of the children who entered LEP classes in the second grade as part of the 1991 cohort, nearly a quarter--24.8 percent--of those in ESL-only programs were able to exit after one year, while just 5.4 percent of those in bilingual classes achieved the same result. Additional data is included in the charts below. The pie on the left

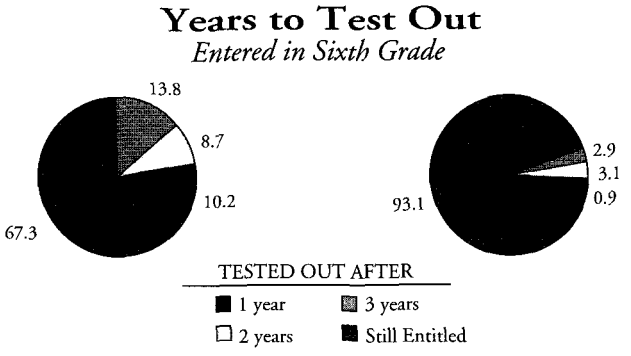
shows the exit rates for children in ESL-only classes, while the pie on the right shows the exit rates for those in bilingual classes.



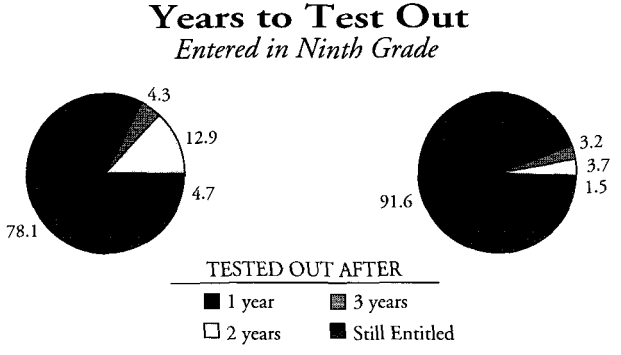
The exit data for the remaining groups in the study show a striking decline in success rates of both ESL-only and bilingual education students. The older children are when they enter LEP programs, the smaller their chances of learning English well enough to test out. However, according to the statistics, students who enter at any grade level are more likely to succeed if they receive ESL-only rather than bilingual instruction. Exit data for the third-grade 1991 is shown in the chart below. The pie on the left refers to ESL-only programs; the one on the right, to bilingual programs.



In the sixth-grade 1991 cohort, just 10.2 percent of the ESL-only students tested out of the program after one year, while *less than one in a hundred*--0.9 percent--of the bilingual education students were qualified to make the transition to mainstream classes. Exit data appears in the charts below. The pie on the left refers to ESL-only programs; the one on the right, to bilingual programs.



The statistics for the ninth grade 1991 cohort are disturbing for both ESL-only and bilingual education students, but even here, ESL-only students fared better than their peers in bilingual education classes. Exit rates for this group are given below. The pie on the left refers to ESL-only programs; the one on the left, to bilingual education programs.



These statistics suggest that LEP programs have met with only limited success and that in the upper grades, bilingual education in particular has been a documented failure. Yet, it is not reasonable to conclude that older children are incapable of learning a second language. Rosalie Pedalino Porter shows that high school students participating in the Newton, Massachusetts LEP program, did indeed become proficient in English. The Newton plan provides one to three hours per day of ESL instruction combined with three to five hours per day in regular classes taught in English, which include art, music, physical education, mathematics, science and social studies. The number of hours in regular classes increases in tandem with the student's abilities, and the LEP teachers work closely with the mainstream teachers to monitor each student's progress. (*Forked Tongue,*126-141) In Fairfax, Virginia, where bilingual programs were replaced with ESL-only programs in 1969, 80% of the LEP students routinely achieve English proficiency. Although bilingual

education advocates argue that this is because Fairfax students are from upper or middle-class backgrounds, two-thirds of LEP students are actually economically disadvantaged. (*Forked Tongue*, 146-147) In my own experience, many English-speaking American students who begin foreign language study in ninth grade become fluent and literate in Spanish or French after three or four years, even though they receive only 50 minutes of instruction a day, provided they are motivated and their teachers conduct class primarily in the target language. It is simply wrong to assume that students beginning the study of a second language in the ninth grade are incapable of attaining fluency.

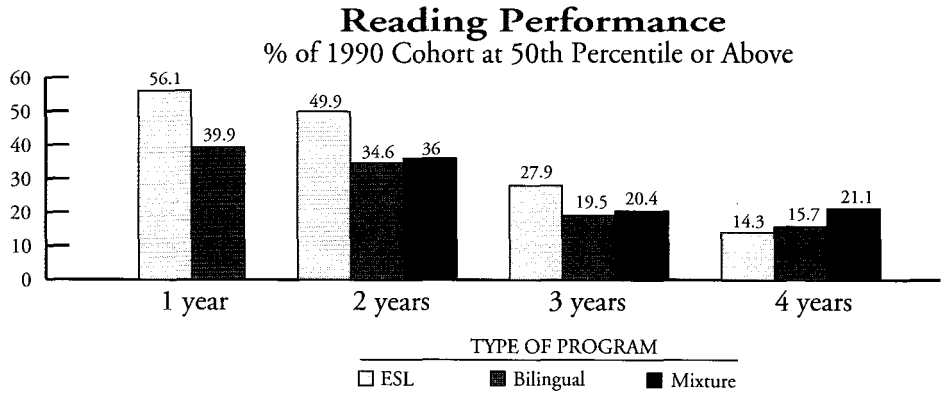
New York City is throwing away billions of tax dollars on programs based on methods that simply do not produce the desired result, while assigning a subordinate role to methods shown to be more efficient. Of those students who did not score well enough on the LAB test to enter regular mainstream classes after four years of special LEP instruction, most were in bilingual classes. Yet, in spite of the data demonstrating the ineffectiveness of bilingual education, most school systems give preference to this method over ESL. New York mandates that all LEP students receive some type of special instruction. On the elementary level, if 15 or more students in the same grade, or in two contiguous grades, have the same home language, then the school must provide a program of native-language instruction for those children. On the secondary level, if 20 or more students in the same grade have the same home language, then the school must provide a bilingual program. Students enter ESL programs only if their school does not provide a bilingual program.

Parents do have the right to opt for ESL even if bilingual education is available, or they may opt out of LEP programs entirely. However, they are often discouraged from doing so. According to Diane Ravitch, senior research scholar at New York University and co-founder of the Educational Excellence Network, parents wishing to remove their children from the assigned course of instruction must go through a long and harrowing appeal process which may well daunt recent immigrants with an imperfect knowledge of the system and a poor command of English. A parent who wishes to buck the system "must go to the school and obtain the permission of the principal," explains Ravitch; "then she must meet with the bilingual coordinator for the school, who is obliged to tell the parent about the special value of the bilingual program, the training of its staff, and the benefits to her child. Only a parent who is able to pass through this battery of interviews and various forms intended to discourage her may then move her child out of the bilingual program." (6) Nevertheless, increasing numbers of parents and teachers advocate this route. (Pyle, A1)

READING AND MATH SCORES OF FORMER LEP STUDENTS

Follow-up statistics presented in the New York City report on students who have tested out of special programs show that the earlier students left LEP classes, the greater their chance of success later on in their school careers. According to the Longitudinal Report, "Students in both cohorts who tested out of LEP-entitlement after one or two years of service generally performed above average on the citywide tests of reading (in English) and mathematics that were given in spring, 1994. However, there were large differences in performance between those who had been served in ESL-only versus bilingual programs, and between those who exited after one or two years versus those who exited after three or more years." (ix) The students who had been enrolled in ESL-only programs received better scores than those in bilingual programs in both reading and math. The earlier students tested out of the program, the better their scores.

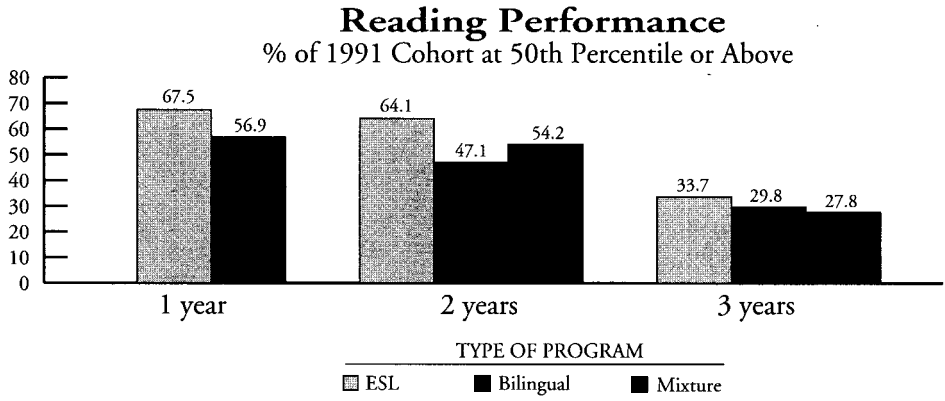
In New York City, students' reading ability is evaluated by the DRP (Degrees of Reading Power) test, which measures ability to read and understand English prose. The fiftieth percentile marks grade level. On a bell curve, about 50 percent of the students taking the test should score around grade level, with 25 percent scoring above and 25 percent scoring below. That is, one would expect 75 percent to be performing at or above grade level. Statistics on reading scores for children in the 1990 cohort testing out of LEP programs after one, two, three and four years are given below.



With respect to students who entered kindergarten or grade 1 in 1990 and tested out of special LEP programs within one or two years, about 50 percent of those who had been in ESL classes and 38 percent of those who had been in bilingual classes were reading at or above grade level in spring, 1994. Of those who tested out of entitlement programs after three years or longer, about 28 percent of those

who had been in ESL programs and 20 percent of those who had been in bilingual programs were reading at or above grade level.

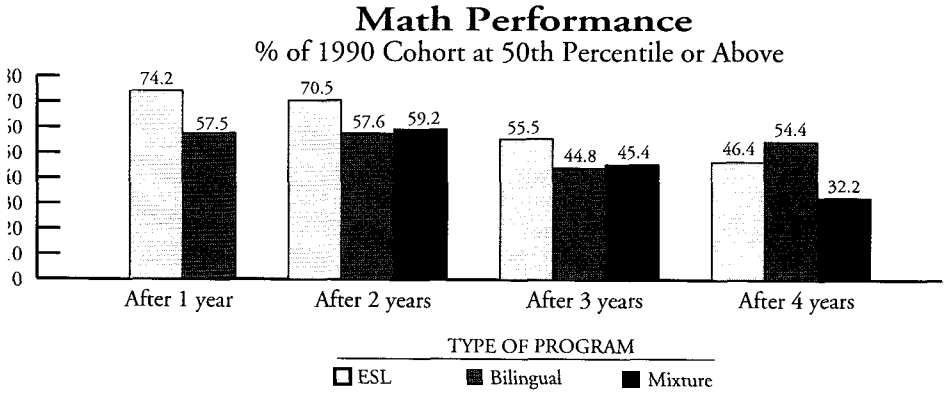
Students in the 1991 cohort achieved similar results, as shown in the chart below.



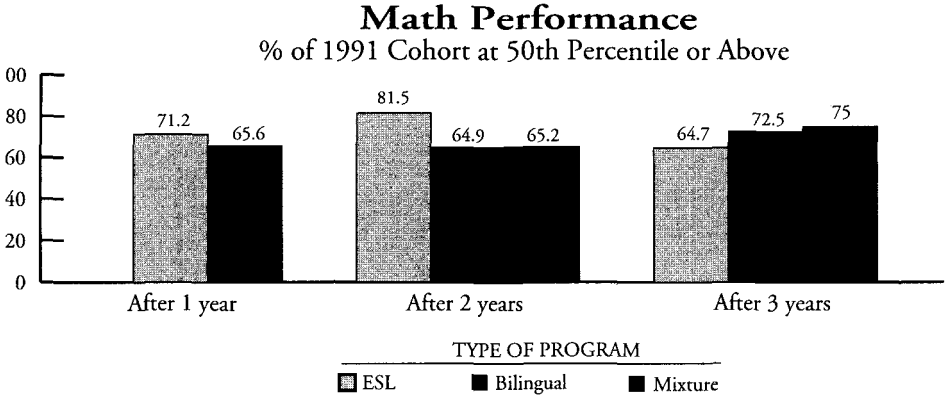
In the 1990 cohort, a total of 3147 students who had been in ESL-only classes and 3,323 students who had been in bilingual classes were tested. Of those who had been in ESL-only classes, 49 percent eventually read at grade level, while only 32 percent of those who had been in bilingual classes performed that well. Of the total 552 students who had been in mixed classes, 26 percent read at grade level after two, three, or four years of LEP instruction. In the 1991 cohort, a total of 334 students who had been in ESL-only classes, 217 who had been in bilingual classes, and 42 who had been in mixed classes were tested; 57 percent of the first group, 43 percent of the second, and 42 percent of the third eventually performed at grade level in reading. Although children who had been in ESL-only classes out-performed their peers in other LEP programs, many students--no matter what program they were in--were still not performing at grade level. Even so, the percentage of those who had been in ESL-only classes was higher than for the general New York City school population, 47.5 percent of which reads at grade level or above.[1] The percentage of those students reading at grade level who had been in bilingual or mixed programs was below the citywide average for both cohorts.

The math scores of former LEP students who tested out of special programs were higher than their reading scores. This is not surprising, since mathematical concepts and skills are not entirely language based. Even children who have not mastered English can grasp the notion "1/2 " or learn to multiply 17 X 18, although, as we shall see below, the language of instruction does seem to affect math education somewhat, especially for children who have been in LEP programs for more than two years.

The mathematical achievement of students is measured by the CAT/5 test. The fiftieth percentile marks grade level. Nationally, 50 percent of the children to take the test perform at the fiftieth percentile, with 25 percent above and 25 percent below. Of the children in the 1990 cohort who tested out of LEP programs after one year, 74.2 percent of those who had been in ESL-only classes and 57.5 percent of those who had been in bilingual classes were performing at grade level or above in mathematics. This means that students who had tested out of LEP programs after one year and had been in ESL-programs were performing as well as the general native English-speaking school population. Of the students who exited after two years, 70.5 percent of those who had been in ESL-only, 57.6 percent of those who had been in bilingual classes, and 59.2 percent of those who had been in mixed classes scored at or above the 50th percentile in math. Once again, the first group performed very near the national norm. After three years, students who had received ESL-only instruction continued to out-perform those in other types of classes, with 55.5 percent of those enrolled in ESL-only, 44.8 percent of those in bilingual, and 45.4 percent of those in mixed classes achieving grade level. The percentage of students who scored at or above grade level in mathematics was lower for those who exited LEP-programs after four years than for their peers who exited earlier. Of those who had been in ESL-only classes, only 46.4 percent were performing at grade level in mathematics, considerably lower than the 55.5 percent of their peers who exited after three years. Of those who had been in bilingual classes, the percentage was larger, 54.4 percent, but still lower than for the ESL-only group that exited after three years. Of those who had been in mixed classes, only 32.2 percent were performing at grade level. This information is shown graphically in the chart below.



For the 1991 cohort, the statistics are even more encouraging, as shown in the following chart.



The figures shown in the preceding chart are especially impressive in view of the fact that in New York only 53.3 percent of the general school population is at or above grade level in mathematics.[2] Thus, a larger percentage of former LEP students than others achieve or exceed grade level.

As in the reading test, students who exited LEP programs in one or two years did better than those who took longer to test out of the program. In general, students who had been in ESL-only programs achieved higher scores than those in bilingual classes, although this trend was reversed for the students in both the 1990 and 1991 cohorts who took longest to test out of the program. The Longitudinal Study states that, "No explanation is known for this reversal." (LS 25) However, the reason is not difficult to deduce.

ESL-only children who tested out of the program after three years may have less aptitude for English, less competent teachers, or less exposure to the language outside the classroom than those who test out earlier. It is also possible that they are enrolled in less intensive programs. For whatever reason, these students have had greater difficulty assimilating English than their peers who exited ESL-only classes after one or two years. If these students who have had trouble with English are taught mathematical concepts in English, they will obviously have certain difficulty mastering the material. It is logical that students who had been kept in native-language classes for a long period of time and were taught mathematical concepts in their native language, or in mixed classes in which the material taught in one language was reinforced in the other, would learn these concepts better than those who were taught in a language they did not fully understand. In other words, it

stands to reason that those students who had so much difficulty mastering English that it took them three or four years to exit the program and who, while in the program, received content instruction primarily in their native language, would perform better in content areas than those who had comparable difficulty learning English but had content instruction in English.

Two factors prevent these statistics from being used as an argument for native-language teaching: 1) The number of students who comprise the group that deviates from the norm is very small. Only 314 students tested out of LEP programs after four years and were tested for reading in the 1990 cohort, while 3200 tested out after one year, 1808 tested out after two years and 1700 tested out after three years. Of those students in the 1990 cohort who took the CAT/5 in math, 3128 had tested out of LEP after one year, 1758 after two years, and 1552 after three years. The groups that tested out after four years consisted of only 217 students, a fraction of the other groups. The authors of the Longitudinal Report themselves seem to dismiss this reversal, noting that the group was "small in relation to the 1990 cohort as a whole." (LS 25) 2) The statistics given here are for students who do eventually test out of native-language bilingual education programs. However, the majority of children who enter bilingual education programs in which they are taught primarily in their native language *never test out.* The relative few who do achieve English proficiency after three or four years, perform better than those who have been in ESL-only programs, but a smaller percentage of bilingually trained than ESL-trained students ever achieve proficiency at all. As shown later on in this article, the vast majority of those students in native-language bilingual education classes who took the CAT/5 in their native language is performing far below the norm.

The authors of the New York City report, ever wary of the reaction their findings will elicit from the bilingual lobby, caution that, "When interpreting this finding, one should be aware that students who exit ESL/bilingual classes earlier have spent more time in monolingual-English classes than those who exit later." (ix) Later, in their discussion of the achievement score data in reading and math, they attribute the higher percentage of students performing at grade level among those who exit LEP programs earlier to the fact that they "have spent more time in monolingual-English classes" than those who took longer to test out of the programs. (LS 25) Exactly. The sooner students are mainstreamed, the more thoroughly they will master the language and the better they will do on tests designed for the general school population. Yet, the New York City Schools recently moved to keep children in LEP programs for a longer period of time than ever. In 1989 the criterion for entitlement to ESL/bilingual services was changed. Previously, a LAB score at or below the 20th percentile was the cutoff point. In 1989 it was raised to a LAB score at or

below the 40th percentile, greatly enlarging the pool of children eligible for LEP services. This move, favored by the bilingual lobby, resulted in jobs for administrators, teachers, assistants, and clerical workers employed by the system. However, the data from the Longitudinal Report suggests that it has not benefited the children.

REACTIONS TO THE LONGITUDINAL STUDY

The New York City study poked a hole in the multi-million-dollar bilingual education balloon. Schools Chancellor Ramón C. Cortines was forced to admit that bilingual education was not working. He was quoted in the New York Times as saying: "This report appears to show that our students in bilingual programs are not showing rapid enough progress in English language proficiency." Mr. Cortines promised to form a committee of parents and educators to determine which programs best service New York City's 150,000 students whose first language is not English. However, on June 15, 1995, Mr. Cortines, plagued by quarrels with Mayor Rudolph Giuliani over control of the schools, budgetary constraints, school safety, and other issues, resigned effective October 15, 1995.

Diane Ravitch points out that, "Because New York City has a large and vocal bilingual constituency (many of them employed by the school system), the report was a hot potato." (5) Aware that they were stepping on some powerful toes, the authors and Chancellor Ramón Cortines made every effort to deflect criticism by citing discrepant evidence and stressing the "preliminary nature" of the report. They refer the reader to a study by J. D. Ramírez and another by V. P. Collier and W. P. Thomas that advocate keeping children in bilingual programs as long as possible. Ramírez compares the development of reading and mathematical skills for Spanish-speaking children who have participated in English-immersion, early-exit immersion, and late-exit immersion programs. He finds that LEP students who stay in bilingual programs for the maximum number of years acquired reading and mathematical skills as fast or faster than those in the other types of programs studied. (Christine Rossell has found methodological flaws in the Ramírez Report; she contends that Ramírez's data is not actually based on what occurred in classrooms, that there was as much variation within types of programs as between types of programs, and that some of the early- and late-immersion programs were really much more like English immersion.) (Wilson 39) Collier and Thomas, who studied the progress of LEP students who received their schooling only in English with those who received bilingual education, show that the first group received lower scores on standardized tests than the second.

No sooner was the Longitudinal Study published than dissident voices were raised. This is not surprising in view of the fact that, as Rosalie Pedalino Porter demonstrates amply in her book *Forked Tongue,* bilingual education is a highly charged political issue. Since most Spanish-speaking children are in bilingual education classes, and bilingual education provides employment for thousands of Hispanic teachers and activists, the bilingual lobby--mostly Hispanic--had every reason to feel threatened. Luis O. Reyes, Manhattan representative to the New York City School Board, criticized the comparisons between the achievements of Korean and Russian children and those of Hispanic and Haitian children, arguing that the former come from a higher socio-economic background than the latter. (Leone 1) Mr. Reyes did not take into account the fact that in the past other immigrant groups such as Italians, Eastern European Jews, Japanese and Vietnamese usually came from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, yet often excelled in school. Ofelia García, a professor of bilingual education, challenged the report before the Board of Education of the City of New York on November 16, 1994. She argued that the Longitudinal Study provided no control of variables: "The study doesn't isolate the many different independent variables of the groups studied, especially socio-educational variables and ethnic identification variables, focusing instead only on educational treatment." (2) She also argued that the report presented "only descriptive data without subjecting it to any kind of statistical analysis," and that causality was not properly analyzed. (2)

In order to assess reactions to the report of ESL/bilingual educators and administrators, I telephoned several specialists and borough coordinators for LEP programs. None of the people I called was willing to converse with me; they would not give me a statement or allow me to use their names. Surprisingly, most told me that they had not actually seen the report. I called Lillian Hernández, Executive Director of Bilingual and ESL Programs in the New York City Public Schools to ask her reaction to the report. I was especially interested in knowing why the report had not been more widely distributed among people whose job it is to educate LEP students. She told me that the Longitudinal Report was completely inaccurate, that it "did an injustice to the program" and "warped the entire picture," and referred me to a follow-up report issued by Chancellor Cortines two weeks after the Longitudinal Report. I tried to ask Ms. Hernández several questions--for example, what changes, if any, had been made in the education of LEP-entitled students as a result of the statistics provided in the study, what the educational backgrounds were of LEP students entering New York City schools in the upper grades and what the linguistic make-up was of the pool of ESL/bilingual teachers. However, she cut me short to go to a meeting, suggesting that I call back another day. When I called back, she declined to come to the phone after the secretary had given her my name.

Although I left a message, she did not return my call. The reluctance of bilingual educators to discuss the Longitudinal Study is disturbing because it seems to indicate an unwillingness to confront the data.

Ms. Hernández did send me a copy of the report issued by Mr. Cortines in November, 1994. According to the Chancellor, this document contains positive findings on the rate of progress of LEP students. "Not only does it show that LEP students are mastering English, improving their reading ability in the native language and improving their skills in content area such as math, it also shows that in the majority of cases, their learning progress exceeds that of other students being tested." (1, underlining Cortines')

Mr. Cortines attempts to lessen the impact of the data on low exit rates from LEP programs by stating that, "As important a goal as transition to mainstream classes is for bilingual and ... ESL programs, that is not the only goal." (1) Apparently, Mr. Cortines thinks that even though large numbers of children never learn enough English to test out of LEP programs, the school system should congratulate itself because some do acquire native-language reading and math skills. He does not take into consideration that those reading skills in Spanish will not allow children to participate in the greater society--that is, to enter college and to obtain high-paying jobs--unless they can also communicate and achieve a high level of literacy in English.[3] Although Mr. Cortines may stress that learning English is not the *only* goal of bilingual/LEP programs, it must certainly be the *main* goal if it is to provide LEP students with the basic tool they need to function in American society. *Lau vs. Nichols,* the 1974 Supreme Court decision that upheld the right of LEP students to supplementary language services states that, "Any ability grouping or tracking system employed by the school system to deal with the special language skill needs of national origin minority children must not operate as an education deadend or permanent track." (Wilson 47) Certainly, any system that does not achieve mainstreaming must be considered "deadend." Mr. Cortines does concede that "not all the news is good." (1)However, he does not mention the unacceptably high percentage of LEP students who fail to test out of special programs or the fact that students who have been enrolled in ESL classes not only mainstream at a higher rate than those who have been in bilingual classes but also achieve better scores in math and reading when they do. Furthermore, he does not mention some damning data on math achievement scores of LEP students included in *Citywide Test Results,* discussed below.

While the Longitudinal Study focuses on exit rates and the progress of children who have tested out of the program, the paper issued in November focuses on the

achievement of LEP students *during* the period in which they are in bilingual or ESL classes. The document consists primarily of comparisons between the 1993 and 1995 scores of LEP students on reading and math tests. The authors conclude that although the scores of LEP students were below average on the English-language test, their scores in all areas showed improvement. In reading achievement LEP students performed well below the national norm, but this is to be expected because these children took the test in their second language. Students in all grades showed a better rate of improvement than the national norm on the DRP test, and in five of the seven grades tested their average one-year gains exceeded the norms for English-speaking students. LEP students also made greater gains on the LAB tests than the norms.

On the citywide mathematics tests administered in English, LEP students showed more improvement than the norms in grades 6, 7, and 8; in other grades, they improved at the same rate as the norms group. LEP students who took the math test in Spanish or Chinese improved at a faster rate than the norms group, but this is of minimum significance, since this group consisted only of 265 students, as compared with 17,435 students who did not take the test in translation. The authors of the report caution that the data from the tests given in Chinese and Spanish "must be interpreted cautiously because the groups involved are small." (*Educational Achievement*) More data is not available because CAT/5 tests were administered for the first time in 1993 only in pilot form and only in Spanish.

However, more telling figures are available in another document, the *Citywide Test Results in Mathematics, Spring, 1995*, made public in June, 1995. This document deals more fully with the scores of the 26,248 students who took the CAT/5 in Chinese, Spanish, or Haitian Creole and contradicts the rosy picture painted by the report issued in November, 1994. Although no comparison figures are available for Haitian students since the test was offered in Haitian Creole in 1995 for the first time, the data that does appear is quite troubling. According to this document, 16.6 percent of the children who took the CAT/5 in translation were performing at or above grade level in mathematics. The authors point out that this figure represents an improvement of 1.1 percent over the scores of the previous year, yet it is far below the 53.3 percent for students who took the English version.

Educational Achievement of LEP-Entitled Students while Enrolled in Bilingual and ESL Programs does indeed point to some successes and these are certainly relevant. The data shows that some LEP children are indeed learning reading and mathematics in school. Yet, this response to the Longitudinal Study fails to address some fundamental problems. Although LEP students are *improving* faster than the

norms, as a group, they continue to *perform* below the norms. Of course, to a certain extent, this is to be expected, since many of these students come from impoverished, war-torn areas where they received little or no education. However, the data provided by the New York City Board of Education shows that claims that native-language instruction enables children to catch up, work at grade level, and keep from falling behind are patent exaggerations. The failure of the authors of the response to the Longitudinal Study to mention that only 16.6 percent of the LEP children who took the CAT/5 in their native languages are performing at grade level throws into question the validity of their report. Furthermore, this document avoids completely the primary issue: many LEP students--in fact, the vast majority of those in the upper grades--never learn enough English to integrate into regular classes, which means that even if they have learned some math and reading skills in their native language, their opportunities are severely limited. The *Educational Achievement* report also eschews the question of which methods are most effective for teaching LEP students; since mainstreaming is not the focus, the higher success rate of ESL students as compared to that of bilingual education students is simply not mentioned. The precipitousness with which this second report was issued--just two weeks on the heels of the Longitudinal Study--is an indication of how uncomfortable the data from the first study made the bilingual lobby.

DATA FROM OTHER SOURCES

Although a great deal of research exists on teaching LEP students, much of it has been done by individuals with a vested interest in a particular method. A study of LEP programs in California, conducted by a pro-bilingual committee, failed to reach any conclusion about the effectiveness of those programs because, according to the evaluators, no valid assessment instruments are available. According to Robert E. Rossier, who analyzed the report, the "deck appears to have been stacked from the beginning" in favor of native-language instruction, but even this biased group was not able to produce data to support bilingual education. (30) While the report contains a huge amount of information, it offers no statistical data on the efficiency of current programs to mainstream students or teach them subject content. This is odd in view of the fact that research exists on language testing and ways in which it can contribute to second language acquisition. (Shohamy, 133-144) In spite of the reticence of the evaluating team, Rossier found that the report does include information that "points to the conclusion that California's heavy reliance on native language teaching has not served LEP students well." Bilingual programs "described as exemplary" have not resulted in mainstreaming and improved graduation rates, but instead "have resulted in delaying the learning of English, delaying the enrollment of LEP students in mainstream classes, and, in

many cases, denying these students the opportunity to enroll in classes required for graduation." (48)

But if experts in bilingual education are unwilling to recognize the system's weaknesses, many teachers and parents are not. California has recently seen a growing movement to educate LEP students in English, and at least four districts in the southern part of the state have petitioned to drop native-language instruction. Last year, the state cited dozens of districts for failure to provide adequate English-language instruction to its LEP students, thereby impeding their integration into regular classes. Furthermore, some disgruntled parents are opting to take their children out of bilingual programs in favor of ESL programs. (Pyle, A1)

In New York, in spite of the obstacles facing parents wishing to remove their children from bilingual education classes, families are taking a stand against the system. In September 1995, the Bushwick Parents Organization in Brooklyn, New York, filed suit against the State Commissioner of Education, charging that tens of thousands of immigrant children in New York City has been kept in bilingual classes for excessive amounts of time. Representing 150 mostly Hispanic families, the organization claimed that their children languished in bilingual programs for as long as six years. The parties to the suit complained that once students entered the system, they were trapped in a "prison" where they learned little English and not much of anything else, despite parents' protests. (*New York Times*, September 21, 1995)

The situation in California is complicated by the efforts of bureaucrats in the California Department of Education (CDE) to dictate bilingual education in the schools. In 1976 the state legislature adopted the Chacon-Moscone Bilingual-Bicultural Education Act, which stipulated that school districts should be given "great flexibility" in designing programs for LEP students. However, the CDE eliminated that flexibility, imposing rigid requirements that school boards provide native-language instruction; those that failed to comply risked losing state funding. The CDE was assisted by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), which set increasingly rigorous qualifications for teachers and required them to show proficiency in the language of their students.

The imposition of bilingual education led to many abuses, the most common of which are: 1) holding students in native-language classes for much longer than the maximum three years recommended; 2) providing students with minimal English instruction--sometimes just 20 minutes a day; 3) placing students in native-language classes against their will and against the will of their parents; 4) placing students who speak one language in "native-language" classes taught in a tongue other

than their own--for example, placing Vietnamese-speaking students in classes taught in Spanish. Even after the Chacon-Moscone Act expired, bilingual activists and CDE bureaucrats maneuvered to make certain school systems maintain bilingual education programs as though the law were still in effect.

In March, 1995, when the State Board of Education was considering new regulations giving local school systems greater flexibility in designing and administering bilingual programs, bilingual activists and CDE bureaucrats once more managed to hinder these efforts. Furthermore, the CTC announced that teachers would have to obtain one of two new credentials--the Cross-cultural Language and Academic Development (CLAD) license or the bilingual CLAD license--or else lose their jobs, even if they had had many years of experience teaching LEP students successfully. Large numbers of California teachers, disgusted by the abuses and tired of the demands of the bilingual lobby, have taken a stand against the bureaucrats. The California Teachers Association (CTA) is battling against the new regulations, which have bolstered support for an outright ban on bilingual education and a requirement that LEP students be taught in English exclusively. (*CTA Action,* 14) Furthermore, the CTA has adopted an official position on bilingual education which states: "All programs shall enable students to attain verbal and academic competency in English." (*CTA Action,* 15)

Steven F. Wilson, special assistant to Governor William Weld of Massachusetts and director of strategic planning, also favors a more flexible approach to teaching LEP students. In his study of bilingual education in Boston, Wilson reached conclusions similar to Rossier's. In his opinion, many of the criticisms that have been made of bilingual education in other regions of the country are applicable to the Boston program, which services 16.6 percent of all Boston school children and 40.5 percent of Hispanic children. These include "overenrollment, the late exit to regular classes by TBE (transitional bilingual education) students, insufficient English instruction, inadequate preparation to participate in the mainstream economy, questionable claims of extra-academic benefits, and the charge that bilingual education is an employment system."(46) Since studies show widespread dissatisfaction with the current system, Wilson advocates allowing parents greater choice in determining how their children will be educated.

In spite of the contention of many bilingual educators that children need to be taught in their native languages in order not to fall behind in school, throughout the country teachers are coming up with strategies for teaching school subjects without resorting to native-language instruction. In El Paso, Texas, bilingual immersion, an innovative approach toward educating LEP students, has produced

promising results. In this system, children are taught in English from the first day of first grade. The material is structured so that the children understand what they are taught and respond in English from the beginning. *Bilingual Immersion: A Longitudinal Evaluation of the El Paso Program* compares bilingual immersion with transitional bilingual education and finds that children in bilingual immersion programs actually do better in math and reading than those in bilingual programs in the lower grades, and do about the same beyond sixth grade. However, bilingual immersion has definite advantages, for it "leads to more rapid, successful, and increased integration of Latino students into the mainstream, with no detrimental effects in any area of achievement." (Gersten, iii) The difficult transition from native-language to English instruction described by Ramírez is avoided. Furthermore, bilingual immersion allows school districts more flexibility by making it feasible for one teacher to accommodate students of different language backgrounds. Since the native language component would last only from 30 to 90 minutes a day, one bilingual teacher could service three to five classrooms and school districts could therefore make more effective use of their bilingual teachers.

CONCLUSIONS

As the New York City Longitudinal Report makes amply clear, bilingual education is shortchanging our LEP students. Since native-language instruction is the most widely used method of teaching LEP students nationwide, it is essential that school boards study the findings of the Longitudinal Study very carefully. Failure to integrate non-English-speaking students will have serious repercussions well into the next century. According to the Census Bureau, only 52 percent of Hispanics finish high school, compared with 82 percent of white non-Hispanics and 75 percent of African-Americans. Even among Hispanics born in this country, the graduation rate is only 60 percent. Since Hispanics are expected to constitute more than a fifth of the population by the year 2010, the United States risks a dramatic drop in its overall educational level unless the trend is reversed. The Education Department claims that lack of proficiency in English is an important factor in the dropout rate. More than 83 percent of Hispanic students who don't speak English fail to graduate. The most tragic result of our failure to integrate language-minority children is the creation of a sub-class whose members do not possess the basic skill they need to take advantage of the educational and career opportunities this country offers. Not only do thousands of immigrant children fail to learn sufficient English in school, but we are producing a generation of native-born Americans whose language skills are so lacking that they may never be able to join the mainstream. The General Accounting Office reports that only 43 percent of the limited-English students in our schools were born abroad, and the GAO counts in this percentage

children born in the U.S. to immigrants who arrived in the last ten years. In an analysis of the GAO statistics, Rosalie Porter asks, "Are 57 percent of the limited-English students native-born and, if so, why are such large numbers not fluent in the common national language?" (Review, 12) The GAO has offered no satisfactory explanation of the figure. Porter conjectures that some of those included among the 57 percent may be Puerto Ricans, but Puerto Ricans cannot account for the entire amount. Some of them may be children who actually speak English, but do not read and write it well enough to function in regular classes. "If this is the case," concludes Porter, "then there may be a large number of students who are wrongly enrolled in programs where they are being taught in another language when what they urgently need is remedial help in reading and writing in English." (Review, 12)

Rather than pouring billions of dollars into programs that research shows do not work, we must explore alternatives to bilingual education. In addition to bilingual immersion, many new programs that combine English with content-area instruction have been developed. Rosalie Porter describes several of them in *Forked Tongue.* (121-158) Some teachers have objected to traditional direct methods, arguing that they rely excessively on rote memorization, mechanical drills and artificial production without understanding. However, approaches such as "community language learning" and " imaging" avoid these pitfalls.[4] Other methods such as the "natural approach," based on the hypothesis that language acquisition occurs when the learner begins to understand messages first in then outside the classroom, are designed specifically to eliminate the mechanical aspects of earlier audio-lingual approaches.[5] During the last two decades the emphasis in both foreign language and ESL instruction has been on communication and proficiency, and today most language professionals reject the structuralist methods of the sixties.[6] Some of the newest methods in second-language learning stress actual content or subject matter, discarding completely rote memorization and mechanical drills. For example, the "strategies" approach--in which students are taught strategies for reading for meaning--is aimed at increasing the reader's ability to cull information from a text, even though he or she may not understand all the vocabulary or structures.

In school districts in which students come from a large number of diverse countries, native-language instruction may simply be impossible. Furthermore, by isolating children into language ghettos in school, we discourage contact with English-speaking youngsters who could facilitate newcomers' socialization into American society and contribute to their mastery of English. Bilingual education advocates have advanced the notion that bilingual education is the only viable means of teaching LEP students and that other methods should be employed only when there are insufficient resources to teach language-minority students in their

native tongues. However, as the Longitudinal Report shows, bilingual education is *not* the most effective tool for teaching LEP students. As we move into the next century, it is essential that we investigate other options.

The new thrust toward some form of limited English immersion in California has been called a grass roots movement. But such a movement cannot succeed unless the public is informed about the nature and consequences of the present system. Most people simply do not know what bilingual education is; many think it is the same as ESL. In a quick informal survey, I asked thirty individuals--fifteen Hispanics and fifteen non-Hispanics--to define bilingual education. Although some of them said they were in favor of it, *not one of them* realized that bilingual education involved extensive content-area instruction in the student's native language. Unless the public is made aware of studies such as the New York City Report and demands changes, we risk creating a permanent linguistically disadvantaged sub-class in this country.

ENDNOTES

1. According to Ramón Cortines, who was Chancellor of New York City schools until June 15, 1995, this average score on the DRP reading represents a 1.9 percentage point improvement on the previous year. (Press Release, 1) New York City's scores are above average for urban school systems, which is 39 percent at or above grade level for reading and 45 percent at or above grade level for math.

2. This score represents a 3.4 percentage point improvement over the previous year. This is the highest score since the 1990-1991 school year. (Press Release, 1) Of the 388,316 students in general education and special programs in grades 3-8 who took the California Achievement Test in math, 26,248 took it in Spanish, Chinese, or Haitian Creole. (Press Release, 3)

3. Some multiculturalists deplore this insistence on English literacy. Sandra Lee McKay argues that "literacy" should not necessarily mean English literacy, and equates the efforts of the "power elite" to insure that immigrants become literate in English with cultural imperialism and racism. She laments the fortunes of the archetypal Cierra family, forced to learn English to gain permanent residency and to acquire an education, even though "all of them may have preferred to manage their lives in their mother tongue." (25) She rants because, "in the case of the Cierra family, the role of language in their lives will be planned in many ways by the elite of the dominant English-speaking community." (28) At the same time, she assures the reader that the Cierras want to get ahead economically. She fails to take into

consideration, however, that without literacy in English, the Cierras will have very limited access to the jobs that make economic advancement possible.

4. See Earl W. Stevick. *Memory, Meaning and Method,* pp. 125-133. This method, which is not new at all, stresses the importance of a warm, comfortable environment or "community" for language learning. See also Earl W. Stevick. *Images and Options in the Language Classroom.* This book develops a set of concepts about verbal and nonverbal imagery, then focuses on options open to teachers who are aware of how imagery functions in the minds of their students.

5. See Stephen D. Krashen and Tracy D. Terrell. *The Natural Approach: Language Acquisition in the Classroom.* With its emphasis on comprehension and communication rather than correctness, this system is applicable both to foreign language study and to second language study (ie. ESL), p. 179.

6. H. H. Stern discusses the evolution of language teaching from structuralism and various direct methods to proficiency in *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching.*

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THE COST OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN THE U.S.: A REVIEW OF THE ALEC REPORT

Marsha Youngblood, M.A.

INTRODUCTION

The American Legislative Council (ALEC) released a report in September 1994 on costs and other issues of bilingual education in the United States as a special supplement to its publication, *The Report Card on American Education 1994*. The authors explain that the small amount of information available on the costs of educating "Limited-English Proficient" (LEP) students, as they are called, motivated this study. These are students whose English is so limited that they cannot do regular classroom work in English.

This national survey comes at a time when the funds per LEP student are diminishing because the total numbers of these students are growing--and will continue to grow for several decades. For example, between 1986 and 1994, the numbers of language minority children in our schools increased from 1.5 million to 3.5 million. (Constable, 8; GAO, 34-35) Yet federal funding has decreased in the past ten years by about 40 percent per LEP student.(GAO,2-3) Today five percent of the children in public schools are born outside the U.S., and in 20 years, the number of school children from first and second-generation immigrant families will almost double. (Fix and Zimmerman, 20)

Of course, not all schools in the United States face these growing numbers. Eighty-four percent of language-minority children live in ten states. However, the problem is more widespread than one might think. The ALEC report cites 1990 statistics showing that the challenge to successfully educate these children is shared throughout many counties in the United States: about one-sixth of 3,140 counties in 47 states have 500 or more limited-English speakers. (ALEC, 4)How much money is needed to educate these growing numbers of American school children who don't speak English? How much do effective programs cost? How much are we currently spending to educate these children? The effort to tie costs to outcomes is an important one, and the ALEC report is one of several to appear recently that urge greater accountability from bilingual education programs.

DEFINITIONS

What constitutes bilingual education? Who is eligible for receiving bilingual education and what kinds of instruction qualify? Stating that there is little agreement throughout states and local school districts about how to answer these questions, this report begins by explaining how federal legislation and the courts have defined bilingual education. The Bilingual Education Act, Title VII, passed by Congress in 1968, states that money can be spent on programs for those who are judged to have "sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language to deny them the opportunity to learn successfully in English-only classrooms." (ALEC, 2) While it is called the Bilingual Education Act, it does not specify any particular method of instruction for limited-English speakers. It simply encourages "new and imaginative" approaches to the problem.

Nor did the Supreme Court mandate one instructional approach for those entitled to help under the Bilingual Education Act. In the case, Lau vs. Nichols (1974), involving the rights of Chinese students to special help in school, the Court ruled that the San Francisco Schools had to provide equal educational opportunity to non-English-speaking Chinese students in form of special language services. Several approaches were acceptable. The Court said, "Teaching English to students of Chinese ancestry is one choice. Giving instruction to this group in Chinese is another. There may be others." (ALEC, 2)

The ALEC report identifies three basic types of bilingual education programs. Two are designated as "bilingual" because these programs spend a significant amount of time teaching children academic subjects as well as reading and writing in their native language and a short amount of time teaching them English (Transitional Bilingual and Developmental Bilingual). The third, designated "English as a Second Language or ESL," provides special instruction in English to language minority students with a special curriculum for learning their academic subjects in English. (ALEC,3)

FINDINGS

1. Federal funding

In 1992, the federal government spent almost $120 million on bilingual education. Most of this money was awarded in grants to state departments of education, universities, resource centers, and local schools through the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs (OBEMLA). The breakdown on federal

monies to bilingual and ESL programs for 1991-92 is as follows, based on figures from the ALEC study:

Figure 1:
Federal Funding for Bilingual Education, 1991-92

	BILINGUAL	PERCENT	ESL	PERCENT	TOTAL
1991.....	$79,326,000	79%	$21,706,000	21%	$101,032,000
1992.....	$84,031,000	70%	$32,156,000	30%	$116,187,000

As the ALEC study points out, 70 to 80 percent of federal funds went to programs teaching all subjects in the native language as opposed to ESL programs--even though no mandate exists for one instructional program over another. (ALEC,3)

2. Numbers of LEP students in state programs

One of the main values of this national survey is drawing together reliable state figures on how many students are enrolled in different types of programs for LEP students. Statistics on federal funding for public education are relatively easy to gather through the National Center for Educational Statistics, the main source of national information on educational spending; however, state figures are much harder to come by.

Using comprehensive figures drawn mostly from the Special Issues Analysis Center, the ALEC study devotes two pages of its report to a state-by-state listing of numbers of students in different programs and the approximate amount spent on these programs in 1991-92. Where numbers from states were not available, the authors of the survey supplied partial figures from the federal government whenever possible. Four states--Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Arkansas--did not apply for grants to collect data on their LEP students, so no statistics are included for them. The total number of students identified as LEP enrolled in U.S. public schools, 1991-92, is reported to be 2,326,546. (ALEC, 3) The following table summarizes the ALEC figures on enrollment of students in special language programs.

Figure 2:
Total LEP Students in Special Programs in Schools, 1991-92

Bilingual	ESL	Unknown	Total
1,126,000	412,844	353,608	1,892,845
60%	22%	18%	

There are several striking things about this data. First of all, 2.3 million LEP students attended public schools in 1991-92, but only 1.9 million (Figure 2) were actually enrolled in special language programs. Almost 20 percent of LEP students were not enrolled in any special language program--450,000 language-minority students who, one surmises, were left to "sink or swim." Secondly, 18 percent of LEP students were enrolled in special programs categorized as "Unknown." This category was created by subtracting the total number of students enrolled in bilingual and ESL programs from the total number of students in special programs. This suggests that states were unable to describe some of their special language programs.

Thirdly, 60 percent of the students in special programs were in bilingual ones while only 22 percent were in ESL programs. The use of a bilingual methodology, which focuses on native language instruction, is almost three times that of the incidence of programs using an ESL methodology, which concentrates on the rapid learning of English.

3. State funding for language minority programs

The Executive Summary of this survey begins by acknowledging the great difficulty of gathering accurate data on the costs of bilingual education at the state and local level. State and local funds account for some 93 percent of public elementary and secondary funding, and good data exists on this spending for all states. However, no one source tells how much of this money was used for special programs for students who do not speak English. The federal government does not require that states report what they spend on limited-English proficient students, so the National Center for Educational Statistics has no specific information on state and local school district spending for this purpose. (ALEC,1)

States vary considerably in what they identify as costs and in how they report these costs. Although states and local school districts are supposed to estimate the total money spent on bilingual education, few guidelines exist on which expenditures should be included. In a paper presented to the American Educational Research Association in 1990, Cynthia Prince and John Hubert outlined some of the flaws in previous attempts at cost analysis. For example, New York and Florida had classified bilingual education as a form of compensatory education and recommended equal funding for the various remedial programs. In another instance, New Mexico had added an additional 50 percent to their per pupil expenditure for each LEP student and used that as their estimate for the cost of bilingual education. It didn't matter which type of program the student was enrolled in, or even if the student was enrolled in no program at all. (Prince and Hubert, 4)

In another case, Connecticut reported a doubling of expenses for bilingual education between 1984 and 1988. At the same time there was less than an 8 percent increase in numbers of language minority students in bilingual education programs. As Prince and Hubert state:

> It is highly unlikely that bilingual education expenditures in Connecticut actually increased by such a large amount in four years, but it is impossible to determine how much of the difference is due to real increases in expenditures and how much is a result of changes in local reporting practices from year to year. (p.6)

To arrive at their cost figures, the authors of the ALEC study used a formula other states have applied: they multiplied numbers of students in each type of program times the average expenditure per pupil in each state. These per pupil expenditures came from a National Education Association report on the states for 1991-92. Using this formula, the ALEC study estimated that a total of $9.9 billion was spent on programs for 1.9 million LEP students at the state and local level in 1991-92. The breakdown by program type is as follows:

Figure 3:
Approximate Costs of State LEP Programs, 1991-92

Bilingual	ESL	Unknown	Total
$5.5 billion	$1.9 billion	$2.4 billion	$9.9billion
55.9%	19.6%	24.5%	

Projecting these same rates of LEP enrollment, the report estimated such special language programs would spend $12 billion in fiscal year 1993-94.(ALEC,8)

As the ALEC report recognizes, these are not actual "costs" of programs for LEP students, but the figures give some idea of how the funds were distributed between the different types of programs. While more money was spent on "Unknown" programs than on ESL programs, there were actually more students in ESL programs (see Figure 2)--a function of differences in per pupil expenditures in different states.

CONCLUSIONS ABOUT COSTS

- First of all, as the ALEC report points out, the funding decisions at both the federal and state levels show a marked preference for native language intensive programs: 70 to 80 percent at the federal level and 60 percent at the state level. Yet as the authors observe, "...there is no conclusive research that demonstrates the

educational superiority of bilingual education over ESL." (ALEC,3) Nor does federal law or the courts show this preference. However, sixteen states have mandated at one time or other that bilingual programs are the only ones that can be provided in certain situations. These states include some of the ones with the largest language minority populations--California, Texas, Illinois, New Mexico, and Massachusetts.

- These cost figures are not really "costs" at all, which the ALEC report readily admits. However, this report does say that these cost figures probably underestimate what's being spent on LEP students. The authors of this report assert that per pupil expenditures are greater for LEP students than for English-proficient students. But as several researchers have pointed out, what is most important is not the total cost of educating LEP students but what the Connecticut State Department of Education termed "differential costs"--the costs unique to bilingual education programs or those costs above and beyond what is required for basic instructional services to educate any child. From this point of view, the ALEC figures are most certainly an overestimate of what was actually spent on all bilingual programs.

For example, Cynthia Prince and John Hubert, in the paper mentioned earlier, outlined the results of a pilot study the Hartford Public Schools carried out to determine differential costs of special programs for language minority students in 1987-88. Using a formula and guidelines developed by the Connecticut State Department of Education for separating costs unique to bilingual services, they came up with $4 million in estimated costs for both bilingual and ESL programs in 1987-88. This figure contrasts sharply with the earlier report from the Hartford Public Schools of spending $29 million in that year for their language minority students! (Prince and Hubert,30)

Prince and Hubert make an important point about the dangers of reporting inaccurate figures: "Regrettably, the total estimated expenditures which have been reported have fueled the perception that bilingual education programs are costly and wasteful, leading the State Board of Education, the state legislature, and the public to question the cost effectiveness of the entire educational program." (p.6)

While the ALEC report clearly favors the ESL approach over the bilingual approach (repeatedly emphasizing that while more has been spent on bilingual programs, no proof exists of their superiority), its intention, does seem to be to encourage all programs to truly meet the needs of language minority children. Still,

proponents of one methodology should be careful that their attempts to discredit another methodology do not endanger funding for all types of bilingual education.

- While the cost figures may be seriously overestimated, the ALEC report points up the great lack of accountability in bilingual education. States are spending a great deal of money on bilingual programs, but we have little idea of how much the programs actually cost and how cost effective the successful ones are.

- Although state and federal programs across the United States are definitely spending much more on bilingual than ESL programs, this does not mean that bilingual programs necessarily cost more than ESL ones. Conventional wisdom says that ESL programs cost more than bilingual programs because no additional teacher is needed when the bilingual teacher does all the instruction--native language, academic subjects, English--in a self-contained classroom. ESL teachers hired as resource teachers who pull students out in small groups for English instruction definitely constitute an additional expense. However, there are other considerations.

For example, the content-based approach to ESL instruction allows regular classroom teachers with some ESL training to teach LEP students English and their academic subjects at the same time. Also, it's not clear what other costs might be incurred in a bilingual program--for such items as native language textbooks, native language assessment materials, and additional special reading teachers for the native language.

Finally, the number of years required for mainstreaming LEP students is definitely a consideration. In the El Paso study (Gersten, Woodward, and Schneider, 29-30), bilingual program students were in Transitional Bilingual Education classes for five to seven years while English immersion students stayed in special classes for only three to four years. A difference of one to three years represents a large extra cost.

In the New York City report, *Educational Progress of Students in Bilingual and English as a Second Language Programs,* reviewed in this issue of READ Perspectives, the costs seem to be about equal. A summary of the high school budget for LEP students shows $23.3 million for bilingual instruction programs and $24.8 million for ESL programs for fiscal year 1994. These figures, communicated in a memo to the Chancellor of Education for New York City, are based on budget summaries and thus may not constitute actual costs. However, in this same memo, additional costs per LEP student are given--$974 per pupil in community school districts and $1215 per pupil in the high schools, which suggests that the budget figures do

reflect differential costs, costs beyond what the average English-speaking student requires.

- Finally, cost is certainly not the only factor in deciding which type of program to adopt. Program effectiveness, measured by student achievement, is the bottom line. However, increased interest in cost analysis bodes well for the whole field of bilingual education. Cost studies reinforce the move toward greater accountability in special programs for language minority children, which this study shows to be seriously lacking. Costs and results are naturally linked. Once we start to look at costs, it is natural to look next at outcomes. How successfully has the money been spent? The ALEC study appropriately raises this question.

CONCLUSIONS ABOUT NON-COST CONCERNS FROM THE ALEC STUDY

In its survey of numbers of students and costs of different programs, the ALEC report discovered some major problems with bilingual education. Perhaps its most important contribution is to point out what has been slipping through the cracks--students, programs, and money.

- Almost 20 percent of LEP students are not in any special program of instruction. Half of these are in California, the state with far and away the largest number of limited-English students--over one million. That means there are many language minority children who are not receiving any help at all but are having to go it alone.

Why is this? Do the solutions seem too complicated to implement? Is it a question of a lack of funds to put a program in place? Are solutions not being adapted to local circumstances? Are parents refusing to place their children in special programs? But beyond these questions is the urgent question of results: What is the school achievement of LEP students who are not given special help? Are they failing in greater numbers?

The ALEC report suggests, but does not state, that inflexibility in choice of methodology may be one reason that so many students are not being enrolled in any special program. The authors urge that we remain flexible at the local level in choosing a methodology because of the "ethnic diversity found in many communities....Therefore, even when a school district is philosophically committed to bilingual education, in reality it may be impossible to hire the qualified native language teachers for the many languages represented in their schools." And again,

"Shortages of qualified bilingual teachers exist in all schools, making it impossible to meet the language needs of all LEP students in their home language."(ALEC,3)

The implication is that if states insist on one methodology only, such as the bilingual one in this case, and schools lack the resources to implement this particular methodology, then many students may end up without any special language program. The ALEC report puts our focus back where it belongs: "Beyond the debate over methodologies, all children must be taught English and provided with equal access to educational opportunities."(ALEC,3) As Dr. Rosalie Porter proposed in her review of the GAO study, let the local school districts receive federal funds on a per capita basis and use the money on the programs that best fit their circumstances. (Porter, 20-21)

- Almost 15 percent of LEP students are enrolled in programs characterized as "Unknown." The ALEC report estimates that $2.4 billion is being spent on these programs.

While the actual amount may be overblown, it is disturbing that a large amount of money is basically not accounted for. States seem to have LEP students enrolled in programs they are not able to describe. However, the authors admit this may be the result of confused data collection rather than states really not understanding what their programs are. For example, Florida reported duplicate data for both ESL and bilingual programs, so the ALEC study put the duplicates in the "unknown" category to avoid inflating the totals incorrectly for the other two programs.

The ALEC report also surmises that this category, "Unknown," suggests that there may be little agreement across the U.S. on names and descriptions of types of special language programs for LEPs. For instance, states may not recognize that TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) is just another acronym for ESL programs, not a distinct program. Therefore, some states may have put TESOL programs in the "Unknown" category, not knowing where they fit.

- There are no consistent means across the U.S. of determining who is a limited-English proficient student. In other words, there's not a single, or even several, tests that are uniformly used to assess whether students really have "sufficient difficulty" reading, writing, speaking, and understanding English to warrant providing them with a special program that develops their ability to learn in English. Therefore, some students may be mistakenly placed in bilingual or ESL programs. Other students may fail to be identified as needing special help. The over- or under-identification of LEP students is a well-known phenomenon.

- Data on LEP students may not be collected at the state and local level, simply because it is not mandated by the federal government. Thus it is difficult for educators and policymakers to get the figures they need in order to judge how much different programs cost for LEP students.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The concerns raised in the ALEC study suggest a number of directions for research and action to help educate language minority students more effectively.

1. Provide state and local districts with formulas and guidelines to accurately estimate the costs of bilingual education.

As the ALEC report concludes, we have to go the state and local level to see what real costs of bilingual education are "since the overwhelming majority of education funds come from state and local sources."(ALEC,8) Federal education funds account for only 6 percent of education funding in the United States. If more states could follow Connecticut's example in creating pilot programs to assess differential costs, then we could correct misconceptions about the amount of money it will take to do the job.

Prince and Hubert suggest an excellent shortcut for other districts needing a less complicated and less time-consuming method of assessing differential costs. Since the Hartford Public Schools found that 95 percent of the costs of special programs were staffing costs, focusing on staffing costs alone would save a lot of time and trouble for other programs. A program could do an accurate cost analysis without tracking down a whole array of expenses like supplies, equipment, and instructional and assessment materials. Instead, programs could estimate the salaries, fringe benefits, substitute teacher costs, longevity--everything associated with staff costs--of instructional staff and administrators hired mainly to work with language minority children. Like Connecticut, other programs could develop formulas for determining which were differential costs. For instance, the Hartford Schools decided that if a teacher spent 85 percent of his/her time with LEP's, then 100 percent of that salary would count as differential cost. On the other hand, salaries of those who spent less than 15% of their time with LEP students would not be counted as differential cost at all. Those working with limited-English students 50 percent of the time would have 50 percent of their salaries, etc. counted as costs of bilingual education. (Prince and Hubert, 28-29)

While such cost studies do require careful planning and coordination, models do exist that will simplify the task and yield more precise figures. These figures would greatly increase state and local accountability.

2. Compare the costs and outcomes of bilingual and ESL programs across the United States.

A starting point would be to gather differential cost data for longitudinal studies that have already been done. Such data would prevent proponents of the different methodologies from using cost as a reason for discrediting a particular methodology. For example, the recent GAO study, *Limited-English Proficiency: A Growing and Costly Challenge Facing Many School Districts,* says that "The Department-funded study, as well as experiences in the districts we visited, indicate that incorporating these nonbilingual approaches could require substantial time and resources." (GAO,16) This bold statement appears to discourage the consideration of English-language intensive programs for LEP students.

On the other hand, Dr. Rosalie Porter, in her review of this GAO study, states: "Compared to the costs and time needed to implement a full bilingual program--essentially setting up entirely separate schooling--the development of an English-intensive program requires a relatively modest investment." (Porter,18) Comparisons of differential costs of these two instructional approaches would offer some hard data for making clear decisions: is one type of program appreciably more expensive than the other?

Such comparisons need to consider measurable outcomes as well as costs for ESL and bilingual programs answering such questions as:

—How many years, on the average, does it take for LEP students in different programs to enter mainstream academic classes?

—What percentage of LEP students in bilingual and ESL programs are able to take all courses required for high school graduation? ("Able" meaning to have the opportunity because they are proficient enough in academic subjects and in English to allow them to enroll in classes required for graduation.)

—Has the school dropout rate among language-minority children decreased in schools with bilingual and ESL programs? Accurate reports on these outcomes are crucial to achieving the goal of ensuring that the greatest number of limited-English students have the opportunity to receive the education they need to become productive, successful citizens.

3. Require greater accountability by putting stricter requirements on state and local programs to report numbers of LEP students and costs of programs.

Follow-up on LEP students not being served by any program to prevent large numbers of students from falling through the cracks. Why are they not being served by any program? Is it a matter of parental choice? Is the main problem the lack of qualified native language teachers?

4. Agree on common assessment tools across the states.

What tests work best? What level of reading, writing, speaking, and listening comprehension in English would require students to be placed in or exit from bilingual education programs at specific grade levels? Unfortunately, because programs are often awarded funds based on numbers of students who need help, programs may not accurately report numbers of students ready to exit for fear of losing funds. Funding sources could instead offer incentives for exiting by giving bonuses to programs with higher rates of mainstreaming LEP students.

5. Encourage more studies of which instructional methods really work with the greatest number of students.

The ALEC report says, "There are excellent schools that are succeeding in educating LEP students." What are these schools doing? What do successful programs that help students from different languages and cultures have in common? Tikunoff et al. took an important step toward answering these questions in their study, *Descriptive Study of Significant Features of Exemplary Special Alternative Instructional Programs.* They selected nine programs across the United States that exhibited outstanding performance by their students for two years in a row based on a combination of factors: increased proficiency in English, improved academic performance, time needed to mainstream students, and rates of meeting promotion requirements for the next grade level.(Gersten et al.,60) Then they did a factor analysis of the practices used in these schools.

A review in the January 1995 issue of READ Perspectives pointed to two "overarching findings" of Tikunoff et al. on effective practices:

– teachers integrated principles of effective instruction with English language development in subject areas, and

– aspects of the learning environment promoted active use of English. (Gersten, et al., 78)

6. Collect data on costs of training teachers in ESL, content-based instruction.

How long would it take and how much would it cost to train teachers and administrators in such effective practices as the Tikunoff study suggests? These practices are essentially non-bilingual and therefore adaptable to many situations. Even though the GAO study suggested that training teachers in non-bilingual techniques could be a costly endeavor, it concludes with a recognition of the need for training.

> In many cases, the most critical aspect in successfully implementing these changes will be training classroom teachers—whose college training often does not prepare them to deal with today's culturally and linguistically diverse students. Therefore, we believe the nation needs to continue efforts to effectively serve LEP students in non-bilingual as well as bilingual settings, and developing a teaching force prepared to educate these students should be a top priority." (GAO, 15)

More obviously needs to be done, and answers to the cost question will help to determine what can be feasible and productive. Should every teacher be an ESL teacher to some degree, capable of teaching school subjects and developing English language skills at the same time? Given the rapidly growing numbers of LEP students and their increasing enrollment in public schools across the United States, it is safe to assume that all teachers will eventually have these students in their classrooms. It is, therefore, not unreasonable to recommend some level of training for all teachers in meeting the needs of LEP students in the most productive ways—ways that lead to higher rates of mainstreaming, promotion, and high school graduation.

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THE BETHLEHEM, PA, ENGLISH ACQUISITION PROGRAM: A BLUEPRINT FOR CHANGE

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Demographic predictions indicate that the significant increase in the number of language minority students attending the nation's public schools will continue well past the year 2,000 (Arias, 1986; Robey, 1984; Toch & Lennon, 1980). In a six year period (1985-1991), the population of K-12 students for whom English is not a native language enrolled in U. S. public schools increased by 51.3 percent (Olson, 1993) to nearly 2.3 million students (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1994). The population of Limited-English Proficient (LEP) students is expected to continue to grow at two and one-half times the rate of English-speaking students by the year 2,000 (US Congressional Record, 1989); and it is anticipated that the population of non-native speakers of English in the nation's schools will reach 3.5 million by that year, and 6 million by the year 2020 (Pallas et al, 1989). Many school districts are hard pressed to determine how best to educate these students.

The following article describes and evaluates the progress of one school system in Pennsylvania, the Bethlehem Area School District, in its efforts to serve the needs of that portion of the student population (10%) requiring some level of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) instruction. (Authors' Note: English as a Second Language [ESL] and ESOL are interchangeable terms. Most U.S. programs for LEP students use "ESL"; Bethlehem prefers to use "ESOL".) The district has recently shifted from a bilingual education program where most of the classroom instruction was in Spanish to a focus on English language learning. The first section of this article describes the program and the rationale for change. Detailed description of this kind helps readers understand what one school system is doing and why.

The second section of this article determines, through a formative evaluation, the strengths and weaknesses that emerged in the first two years of the new program's implementation, and offers recommendations for improvements. The data reported here will be most useful to educators and administrators considering new options for language minority students.

The authors extend their grateful appreciation to the administrators, teachers and staff of the Bethlehem district for their encouragement, for their contributions of time and effort in providing the necessary data, and for the opportunities to observe classrooms and hold discussions with staff members, which contributed so much to this study.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

At the beginning of the 1993-1994 school year, the Bethlehem Area School District replaced its primary language program for limited-English students with a variation of a structured immersion model called the "English Acquisition Program." This article examines the program's design and its relationship to the district's comprehensive curriculum, as well as the formative and summative evaluation paradigm developed for the purpose of assessing and refining the program's strengths and weaknesses. Data from surveys administered after the first year to the professional staff and parents or guardians of students in the program is presented, as well as the results of a qualitative, responsive analysis (Guba & Lincoln, 1981) made by Judith Simons-Turner and Mark J. Connelly, S.J., of St. Joseph's University in May and June of 1995. An informal evaluation of the program after two years of implementation is provided by Ann Goldberg, Program Coordinator. A brief overview of the plans for a longitudinal summative evaluation is outlined. Finally, general recommendations are offered for consideration by other school districts considering the development of a structured immersion program for their limited-English students.

DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

The Bethlehem Area School District is located in Northampton and Lehigh counties in northeastern Pennsylvania. The community has a population of approximately 100,000 and is presently serving 12,966 students of whom 23 percent are Hispanics, 4 percent are African-Americans, and 1 percent are Asian. Approximately 60 percent of the students in the district are residents of the city of Bethlehem, 30 percent are from the suburbs of the city, and 10 percent from the adjacent rural area of the community. Currently, one out of four children enrolled in the Bethlehem district is from an economically disadvantaged home. As such,

20 percent of the students participate in the federally sponsored free/reduced lunch program; and approximately 10 percent reside in federally sponsored subsidized housing, while another 5 percent live in low-income center city housing. There is presently a significant rate of unemployment in the district (6.1 percent), largely due to a long-term decline in the steel and garment manufacturing industries which had been the major source of employment in the area.

Bethlehem's English Acquisition Program presently includes approximately 1,300 students in the first through twelfth grades. The home language of the majority of the language minority students is Spanish (86 percent); however, 14 percent of the students speak a variety of other languages including Portuguese, Indian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, Farsi, Greek, Turkish, Russian, Polish, Czech, Arabic, German, Italian and a few African languages.

CONTEXT FOR PROGRAM CHANGE

For almost 20 years, the Bethlehem schools had provided bilingual education for its limited-English students but by 1992 the district's superintendent, Thomas J. Doluisio, was becoming increasingly concerned about student achievement. Of special concern was the length of time typically required for LEP students to achieve sufficient fluency in English to be able to learn school subjects in a regular, mainstream, classroom and to be able to participate in the extracurricular opportunities offered by the school district. The superintendent had observed that even the most academically talented language minority students frequently failed to enroll in advanced placement courses in the high schools. Furthermore, he noted that many of the language minority students did not participate in many high school activities, although they had taken part in extracurricular events in their bilingual program schools. The superintendent believes that it is important for students to be integrated into the mainstream student body, and to have the opportunity to achieve success among their peers.

Social integration between the language majority and language minority students was not occurring at the high schools, so that important opportunities to develop an appreciation of cultural diversity by all students were not being fostered. Hypothesizing that this trend was most probably a function of the fact that the students enrolled in the bilingual programs seldom attend their neighborhood schools, the superintendent came to the conclusion that a program change was needed if LEP students were to have an equal opportunity to develop to their fullest potential.

Many parents of Spanish-speaking children interviewed by one of the authors of this article applauded the new English acquisition emphasis, asserting that their children's chances for future success would be improved by a program in which they became more fluent in English (Soto and Turner, unpublished study, 1993). These parents pointed out the difficulties they had themselves experienced in seeking employment and social acceptance in the community due to their lack of fluency in English, and asserted that they did not want their children to repeat the same experience. They declared that it is the school district's responsibility to prepare their children to function successfully in the English speaking community. Some of these parents stated that they themselves were taking the responsibility to teach their children their home language and culture, and that the district should teach them "English" and "whatever they need to know to get the best jobs."

In contrast, some community leaders, teachers and principals stated their belief in the research indicating that it is easier for children to learn literacy skills in their first language and that the skills would quickly transfer to English (Collier, 1989; Cummins, 1989; Krashen and Biber, 1988; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1983).

Media coverage was extensive and further aggravated the controversy, with local newspaper and television reporting of the change sometimes characterizing it as "racist" or at the least "ethnocentric." (e.g., *Morning Call*, September 22, 1992; October 18, 1992).

Additionally, although some administrators agreed with the program change in principle, they questioned its immediate design and implementation, asserting that at least a year of planning was necessary to make an effective transition. Ultimately however, it was decided by the school directors that the program change was to be implemented in the fall of 1993, and a leadership team was immediately formed with the responsibility of designing the new "English Acquisition Program." The decision to develop a program locally and not just adopt a successful program from another district was based on the belief that the probability of success would be greater if the teachers and administrative staff of the district were directly involved, given their knowledge of the academic needs of language minority students and their sensitivity to local issues. This approach to the design and implementation of new or radically changed program models has been well documented in the literature and is especially effective when there is mixed reaction to the proposed change (Hall and Hord, 1987: Joyce and Showers, 1988; Showers, Joyce et al, 1987; Hord et al, 1987).

DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENGLISH ACQUISITION PROGRAM

Program design began in February of 1993. A team of district staff members under the leadership of Dr. Michele Kostem, Assistant Superintendent, met weekly for full day planning sessions. Bilingual program teachers and the former director of the bilingual education program participated on this team, as well as key school principals, reading specialists, guidance counselors, teachers and the directors of elementary and secondary education. The first report by the English Acquisition Design Team, *A Ticket for Tomorrow* was published in May, 1993, with an introductory statement reaffirming the prime goal of this program to be that all LEP students would become fluent in English as quickly as possible in order to have access to maximum opportunity for success in school.

While some of the work of the design team was conducted by the committee as a whole, subcommittees were responsible for much of the design of the English Acquisition Program by levels--elementary, middle, and high school. Members of the design team visited program sites in the Fairfax County School District and engaged in extensive discussions regarding context, strategies, and training.

The committee as a whole decided to classify limited-English students into three levels based on their fluency in receptive and expressive language, and their reading and writing in English. Three levels were designated: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. Descriptions of each of these levels appear in Appendix A. Acknowledgment is made to the Fairfax County School District for sharing materials, particularly their proficiency descriptions, with the team.

It should be noted that a fourth category or level for language minority students, designated "low schooled," was used to describe middle school and secondary school students who have some or all of the following characteristics: beginning English-language learner; not attending school on a regular basis; atypical in terms of discrepancy between age and grade placement; underdeveloped math concepts; and lack of knowledge of school social norms" (Design Team, English Acquisition Program, 1993). This designation was made for the purpose of clarifying the difference between students who were simply having academic problems due to their limited English skills, and students who might be failing due to causes other than language difference such as poor or non-attendance or lack of knowledge of appropriate school behaviors.

Because of the considerable disparity among the number of language minority students in each of the district's sixteen elementary schools, each school was categorized based on the percentage of LEP students in the student body:

1. High impact schools - 40-50% of the student body consists of limited-English students

2. Medium impact schools - 12-30% of the student body consists of LEP students

3. Low impact schools - only 0-7% of the students are of Limited-English Proficiency.

High impact schools are given a reduced student-teacher ratio of approximately 22 to 1 rather than the typical district average of 24-26/1. Moderate impact schools also have reduced class sizes when large numbers of language minority students are served at a particular grade level.

Language minority students are generally distributed among the classrooms at each grade level. At the high and moderate impact schools, students in the beginner level of English Acquisition are given 75 minutes of ESOL instruction daily. Intermediate and advanced level English learners are given 45 minutes of ESOL instruction three times per week. At low impact schools, itinerant ESOL teachers schedule sessions for small groups of students from two to four times per week.

Additional support may be provided for these students at the request of individual schools by tutors who are called "second language guides." These second language guides work under the direction of the ESOL teachers and are particularly helpful for students whose home languages are ones other than Spanish.

A Center for Language Assessment (CLA) was planned as an integral part of the English Acquisition Program. In contrast with the district's former assessment center, the new center does not play a major role in moving students from one category of English language proficiency to another, or in exiting students from the program. The design team believed that the decision to change a student's classification is best left to building level professionals who work with these students on a daily basis. Ongoing assessments done in the classroom have more validity than the narrow language sampling done by a central office-based assessor who is unfamiliar with the child.

The English Acquisition program was developed as a flexible model, adjustable at each of the three levels (elementary, middle and secondary) to meet the needs of the particular school. This flexibility would best serve the different students in each building and accommodate organizational differences in the scheduling and instructional design. For example, the elementary schools use self-contained classrooms while the middle schools and high schools are departmentalized and employ team teaching. In addition, depending upon their location within the city, some schools serve a significantly larger number of students who speak a language other

than English in their homes. The English Acquisition Program provides services that simultaneously support the language minority students' content learning as mandated by the district's K-12 curriculum, while promoting the rapid development of the English language.

THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MODEL

Kindergarten students are not served by the ESOL teachers. They receive a language-rich curriculum totally in English based on integrated thematic units. Each language minority student is tested in kindergarten for English-language proficiency by the central office assessor using the PRE-LAS (Avila and Duncan, 1986) during Kindergarten registration, and is then retested at the end of Kindergarten to measure growth and to determine the level of English Acquisition service needed by the child in the first grade.

Research and practical experience have demonstrated that second language training is most effective when it is conducted through communication of meaningful information (Krashen and Terrell, 1983). ESL professionals, reading supervisors and curriculum specialists recommend that organizing the teaching of content area subjects around thematically integrated units is an approach that helps students to learn subject matter while simultaneously acquiring English language skills through listening, speaking, reading and writing (Freeman & Freeman, 1992). The overall goals of the elementary school model are to integrate LEP students into heterogeneous classes; to promote oral language development through the use of literature-based reading and writing instruction; to accelerate learning for all students; to reduce fragmentation by coordinating the LEP student's regular classroom and ESOL classroom educational programs, thus encouraging the development of cognitive connections.

The specific design of ESOL instruction is implemented with some variation at individual elementary schools. At some schools, primary level (grades 1-3) ESOL instruction is a "push-in" model with ESOL teachers and classroom teachers co-teaching the language arts and reading. In these classrooms, the teachers take turns in assuming responsibility for direct instruction, with one teaching a lesson while the other moves inconspicuously around the room helping limited-English students, when necessary, by clarifying concepts or the activation of prior knowledge. This allows for assessment of individual students' patterns of skill acquisition in English. At other schools, the more traditional "pull-out" model is used in which language minority students receive instruction from the ESOL teacher in separate classrooms for 75 minutes daily. However, in all ESOL instruction the emphasis is

on providing students with background knowledge, on clarifying concepts that will be presented by the regular classroom teacher at a later time, and on reteaching skills and content which may be difficult for LEP students when they are first introduced by the classroom teacher.

ESOL teachers employ a variety of strategies to engage students in reading, writing, speaking and listening in response to curriculum content in English at the appropriate grade level. Children are consistently engaged in meaningful uses of the English language.

All elementary students were served in their home schools during the 1993-1995 school years with the exception of the beginner level students in one school who were reassigned because of overcrowding.

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL MODEL

The cornerstone of the middle school level English Acquisition Program is the team concept of Bethlehem's middle school plan. LEP students are assigned to a traditional academic team of teachers who have common planning time to discuss academic preparation and to resolve concerns about students' academic progress or behavior. Important to the middle school model is the vital role of the advisor (homeroom teacher) in the life of the student. All LEP students are assigned to an advisor/advisee group within their appropriate grade level and team. The advisors are responsible for assigning a "buddy" to each language minority student in his/her group, and of fostering English language acquisition through the support and encouragement of these "buddy" relationships. Establishing such a pairing provides language minority students with an immediate, on-going, social opportunity. A special activity period to train "buddies" is part of the plan.

A vital aspect of the middle school program is the "extended day," a formal tutoring period offered to all limited-English students from 3:00 to 3:45 p.m. each school day. Staffed by the ESOL teacher, this program offers the students opportunities for peer tutoring, mentor tutoring, homework help, and serves as a center where students can receive the extra support they need in any of the content areas.

Middle school LEP students are classified into four English proficiency levels: beginner, intermediate, advanced, and low-schooled, and this determines their course enrollment. All students in the district who are classified as "beginners" attend one middle school which provides them with a special approach to subject matter instruction and simultaneous teaching of English language. The academic

program for beginners consists of three periods of ESOL instruction (delivered by the ESOL teacher), one period of mathematics by a regular mathematics teacher, and one period of science or social studies courses delivered by the content teachers daily (each content area is taught for one semester). An additional academic teacher joins the beginner student class for language arts and reading instruction, thereby providing the advantage of two full-time teachers in each beginner class. All beginner students receive two periods of related arts (music, art, etc.) with their "buddies" weekly, and interact with native speakers of English during the advisee/advisor lunch, arts and activity periods each week.

The program for students with intermediate level English language skills is provided in the neighborhood school. The academic program consists of two periods of ESOL daily, and instruction in mathematics, science, and social studies classes with regular academic teachers. The grading in science and social studies is "A/S/N" ("A"=excellent, "S"=satisfactory, "N"= not satisfactory), rather than the traditional "A" through "F" designations.

Advanced level students are also assigned to their home schools and receive a regular program of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies as well as one period of ESOL daily. They are also assigned to a regular advisor/advisee lunch and related arts classes with their "buddies." Hence, they interact with native speakers of English throughout the school day.

THE HIGH SCHOOL MODEL

The high school program (grades nine through twelve) had been an English language instructional program prior to the introduction of the English Acquisition Program. The revised model has two tracks:

1. a curriculum to meet the needs of students who typically take mostly business and vocational-technical courses and who generally plan to enter the work force upon graduation from high school

2. a curriculum which enables students to participate in mainstream classes 30-40% of the time the first year; 55% of the time the second year; and 75-80% of the time the third year and which prepares them to attend institutes of higher education. (see Appendix B, Bethlehem Area School District Secondary Program of Studies)

All students in the English Acquisition program attend Liberty High School where the design team planned a resource room set up with computers, printers and a variety of software to meet the needs of both low schooled and typical learners for remediation activities, high interest/low reading level materials, and more typical learning materials such as word processing programs, course reviews, ESOL software, etc. LEP students are assigned to this resource room instead of to a traditional study hall.

The design team also recommended a mentor program involving both student mentors and adult mentors to advise LEP students on academic and social situations, on survival skills for high school life, and to help the student learning English to focus on personal long term goals.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT PROGRESS

Monitoring student progress is critical to the success of the English Acquisition Program. Three phases of student monitoring are employed regardless of the age of the student in the program: 1) initial testing by the Center for Language Assessment, 2) on-going monitoring of progress and 3) exit evaluations.

1. Initial Testing

The Center for Language Assessment tests students and passes on the information to the schools to assure appropriate placement of students. The Center for Language Assessment uses the LAS-O (Avila, 1990), and the Pre-LAS (Avila, 1986) which may be administered in either English or Spanish, or both, to assess oral proficiency in one or both languages.

The Brigance Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills (Brigance, 1983) is used to measure English reading and Spanish reading for Latino students. A writing sample is taken, and secondary school students are given a basic mathematics test that was adapted from the test used for this same population in the Fairfax County School District. An evaluator at the Center reviews the tests for oral proficiency, reading and writing, and these scores are entered into the data base for each student as a base-line level against which future growth may be measured.

Students who score at the fluent level on the LAS scales, and whose English reading and writing skills are at grade level are identified as "regular education students" and they do not enter the English Acquisition Program. However, students are not presumed ready for the regular classroom solely from the results of one standardized test. For example, a seventh grade student who scores at level 5 (fluent English

speaker) on the LAS-O, but who has only a second grade level of English reading skills would be classified as an intermediate level student in the English Acquisition Program. Through this assessment process, the English Acquisition Program avoids one problem that is frequently associated with structured immersion models. Educators often do not understand that a student's ability to engage in fluent English conversations with peers and staff does not necessarily mean that he or she has a sufficient command of the language to successfully master the context-reduced material from the district curriculum.

2. On-going Monitoring of Student Progress

A progress evaluation of every student in the English Acquisition Program occurs twice each year, in the first and last quarters of the school year. It is after these assessments have been conducted that recommendations for changes of program level are made in the home school. The design committee agreed that beginner, intermediate, advanced and competent (exit) levels were to be defined through descriptions of classroom proficiencies. Each level of oral proficiency (1-6), reading (1-8), and writing (1-5) is described in the "Stages of English Language Acquisition" (See Appendix A). This chart graphically portrays the skills to be mastered at each level of competency in oral language, reading and writing in order for students to move on to the higher levels of the program and be able to function in a mainstream classroom without ESOL support. The program relies on building-based decision-making to determine progress in English language fluency.

3. Exit evaluations

Readiness for exit from the English Acquisition Program is decided by a team of teachers appointed by the principal and is reviewed by the English Acquisition Program Coordinator. Exited students' progress is monitored for a full year to ensure success in the regular program. The school principal assigns the ESOL teacher and the student's classroom teacher the responsibility of documenting each student's oral language, reading and writing capability. For reading assessment, a photocopy of a passage which the student can read and retell successfully, and a copy of the retelling scoring sheet is kept in the student's portfolio. A copy of one of the student's writing samples, taken from actual classroom work, is also added to the student's portfolio. The stages of oral language, reading, and writing are recorded on the appropriate form which is then signed by all team members. One of the teachers informs parents of the program change for their child and all documentation is then sent to the Center for review by the English Language Acquisition Program Coordinator who is responsible for overseeing student progress.

STRONG LEADERSHIP

The design team and the district administration recognized that the program would need strong leadership due to the divergent perspectives of the staff. At the same time it was understood that the program administrator would have to earnestly encourage innovation and flexibility in order to meet the needs of the various district schools and students. Therefore, the position of Program Coordinator was created, and there was general agreement among administration and staff that the leadership and negotiation skills of this administrator would need to be of a superior nature to ensure a smooth transition to the new English Acquisition Program and to allow the program's on-going refinement and improvement.

The Program Coordinator is responsible for all aspects of the education of language minority students, K-12. Responsibilities of this position include developing and administering an annual budget; maintaining the monitoring system for each student in the program; making hiring recommendations for new ESOL staff to principals; supervising the Title VII grant disseminator (PIAGET); overseeing the Center for Language Assessment office, including a full time tester; reviewing and providing materials for administrators and teachers; developing in-service training for ESOL and classroom teachers; working closely with principals to solve problems related to the new program; and, occasionally, dealing with individual student issues.

PREPARING THE TEACHING STAFF

The foundations on which the English Acquisition Program rest include a review of research and theory on second language acquisition and the education of language minority children, as well as on the opinions of experts and the experiences of professionals working with LEP students. Opinions about second language learning and the most effective strategies for teaching language minority students varied considerably among the members of the design team. It is certain that all team members shared a basic commitment to developing the highest quality program possible for promoting both English language learning and academic achievement. Sufficient effort was put into staff development to ensure that the new approach was understood prior to program implementation, and this factor most definitely has contributed to the smooth transition from one program to another.

The design team defined the essential factors for student success in the English Acquisition Program and these criteria were presented to staff prior to the initiation of the program and are regularly reinforced through staff development. Several of these elements are common to all levels of program operation, regardless of grade levels or English proficiency levels of the students.

GUIDELINES COMMON TO ALL LEVELS, K-12

Staff was advised that the assignment of most of the LEP students to their neighborhood or home schools, and the placement of most language minority students in linguistically mixed classrooms would have a major positive impact on the motivation of these children to learn English. However, design team members were realistic about the potential for initial confusion and anxiety on the part of students who had previously been taught almost entirely in their native language.

The provision of a handbook for teachers detailing strategies for dealing with the potential problems was very reassuring, especially for those teachers in low and medium impact schools who might not have worked previously with limited-English students. Teachers were encouraged to create opportunities for socialization and cooperation among language majority and language minority students.

Staff development is essential to the success of a new program and a substantial number of workshops by consultants who are experts in the field of language minority education were provided in the first two years and are an on-going feature of the English Acquisition Program. Workshops are not required, however, teachers are strongly encouraged to attend and they are availing themselves of these opportunities to acquire new skills and strategies.

1. Teacher Collaboration

A keystone of the English Acquisition Program is the collaboration between regular classroom teachers and ESOL teachers. In order for ESOL teachers to give students the background knowledge necessary for understanding content lessons and for actively engaging in classroom learning activities, they need to be constantly aware of both the difficulties common to students learning a second language and the specific problems of individual students. These difficulties are most easily observed and identified by the classroom teacher; however, the ESOL teachers need to know of problem areas in order to provide support for content area learning.

Thus, the program design team recognized the critical role of on-going, scheduled communication and cooperation between the classroom teachers and the ESOL teachers. The emphasis on this collaboration provides a stronger continuity between ESOL instruction and regular classroom instruction than is typical in structured immersion models. An important characteristic of the English Acquisition Program is that ESOL instruction does not focus on the teaching of "English lessons" or on teaching isolated English vocabulary or grammar, but stresses the learning of curriculum content, vocabulary, and grammar simultaneously.

2. Adapting Curriculum and Pedagogy

Another critical element in fostering success of the language minority students at all grade levels (1-12) is the need for regular classroom teachers to engage in on-going curriculum adaptation. Such adaptation can take a variety of forms. However, classroom teachers are expected to use their judgment in adapting curriculum, even if it initially involves a sacrifice of "form" in favor of "content" acquisition. Teachers' understanding of the rationale, strategies and techniques for adapting the standard district curriculum is vital to the success of the program. Both elementary teachers and content area teachers in the middle school and the high school must continually monitor student progress in order to determine what adaptations in structure or format will assure the greatest opportunity for LEP students to use prior knowledge to master the district curriculum.

Teachers are trained to use "scaffolding," i.e., sequential learning, and the concept of a "zone of proximal distance" (Vygotsky, 1978) to accomplish this end. The English Acquisition Program emphasizes that adaptation must be flexible, determined by the teacher on the basis of the competency and needs of the students in a particular classroom. This type of adaptation is absolutely crucial to successful learning of school subjects by LEP children as they learn English. Structured immersion programs that do not provide for teachers' thorough understanding of this construct may, in the end, be less effective than those that are successful in building commitment to curriculum adaptation by all staff.

Teachers may adapt the nature of the instruction, making it hands-on, rich in real objects and illustrations, rather than lecture. For beginner and intermediate level students, teachers may modify the assignments, requiring fewer spelling words (selecting those with the highest frequency), or requiring mastery of only three to five of the major concepts in social studies texts, rather than the entire set of chapter objectives. Teachers are encouraged to modify their evaluation procedures when needed, such as giving a test orally, having the ESOL teacher administer the test, or requiring the mastery of content rather than form. The goal is to evaluate what students know and to build on student strengths.

A number of the Bethlehem schools use the Pennsylvania Instructional Support Team model (IST). A specially trained IST teacher works with the classroom teachers to encourage curriculum adaptation and to measure realistic increments of student learning. A key IST teacher provided valuable in-service in curriculum adaptation for ESOL teachers and staff of the elementary and middle schools.

3. Technology Use

Technology use was encouraged as a strategy that could introduce, reinforce, and review concepts in content area instruction and in acquisition of English language skills. While specific guidelines were not given, teachers were encouraged to review potentially useful software and determine hardware needs. The district has implemented a technology initiative to improve and expand computer use in the schools. All students have surely benefitted to some degree, but it has been especially helpful for ESOL students who need materials that are interactive, motivational, and provide non-judgmental evaluation and feedback. Software designed for early literacy such as the Apple Early Learning package includes many useful software programs. One of the elementary schools with 38% limited-English students is a pilot site for this program. Students attending ESOL classes write their own stories on the computer, hear the computer reading these stories back, and use graphics to enhance their compositions. They also read "living books" on screen, some of which are programmed so the student may highlight an unknown word and hear it read in English or explained in Spanish.

GUIDELINES SPECIFIC TO THE ELEMENTARY PROGRAM

Teachers from the former bilingual education program were a valuable resource and vital to the success of the new program. Many were assigned as teachers of ESOL (the state of Pennsylvania does not have specific ESOL certification), sometimes in schools which had not previously been staffed with bilingual teachers. Others were assigned as regular classroom teachers, adding a bilingual and bicultural element to the monolingual staff, and greatly facilitating communication with Spanish-speaking parents.

A literature-based reading program, initiated at the same time that LEP students were reassigned to their neighborhood schools, avoided the use of traditional "high, middle, and low" reading groups, which could have resulted in placing all the limited-English students in one reading group. The reading textbook contains authentic children's literature selections, grouped by themes. Books that are rich in vivid characters and content provide many opportunities for writing and energetic discussion. Thus English language instruction is organized around children's literature, content area subjects, and thematically integrated units of learning, avoiding instruction of isolated skills. This approach to educating language minority students has been outlined in detail in Yvonne and David Freeman's (1992) book, *Whole Language for Second Language Learners.*

New material is introduced to the LEP students by the ESOL teachers through a variety of strategies, prior to its introduction in the regular classroom. These language-rich, content-rich, ESOL lessons prepare the students to participate in the regular classroom activities with their English-speaking classmates, once they have learned the appropriate background information and skills. ESOL teachers also follow up with a variety of other activities designed to clarify and reinforce the concepts presented in the reading series. Visitors to these stimulating classrooms are startled to see second grade students fully engaged in reading and writing in English. These same students often speak Spanish to each other and Spanish is generally the preferred language in their homes.

Important to students' academic progress is the teaching of English language skills --listening comprehension, speaking, reading and writing--with an integrated approach. Although some researchers (e.g., Cummins, 1989; Krashen, 1985) warn that students need first to learn to speak and understand the language before being taught to read and write in it, abundant experience in Bethlehem and elsewhere demonstrates that each skill reinforces the others when they are used concurrently. When the content of ESOL classes is related to the subject matter taught in the regular classroom, students have the benefit and advantage of "comprehensible input," and these communicative activities become the vehicle for the successful acquisition of English (Krashen & Terrell, 1986).

Close collaboration between regular teachers and teachers of English is more difficult in the ten low impact elementary schools, where two itinerant ESOL teachers see students only two or three times a week. Itinerant ESOL teachers may meet with 40-45 students a week, seeing them in small groups of 4-5 or individually, based on the school schedule and the needs of the students.

For beginner level students in low impact schools, principals can request a "second language guide," a teacher-assistant working under the supervision of the ESOL teacher and classroom teacher. If possible, the second language guide speaks the home language of the student(s). Instructions and written materials for activities in the classroom are always in English, but the second language guide provides concept clarification as needed in the home language. Most beginner level students at low impact schools receive one hour daily of individualized instruction from the second language guide as well as instruction from the ESOL teacher.

GUIDELINES FOR THE MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL

At the middle school level the ESOL teachers, who are bilingual in English and Spanish, team teach with a certified language arts teacher for English and reading instruction. A class of sixth grade beginners might read stories like *The Drinking Gourd* (Winter, 1987) or *Wagon Wheels* (Benner, 1978), learning vocabulary and spending time discussing the meaning and historical events related to the stories. They write sentences, paragraphs and stories which are often entered into the computer. Discussions, debates, oral reports, drama, and choral reading are encouraged. Students also write in a personal journal for five minutes each day and the ESOL teacher responds personally to each student in writing. These activities provide meaningful integration of content, life experiences, and second language development for the students.

Important to the middle school program was the ESL textbook adoption process which began just as the new program was starting. Because beginner level ESOL students were bused to one middle school, and intermediate and advanced level students remained in their neighborhood schools, a range of text book materials were needed across proficiency levels suitable for sixth, seventh and eighth grade students. Teachers consulted with a middle school ESOL consultant from the Fairfax County School District who recommended the selection of interactive materials containing high quality literature. In a series of meetings over a three-month period, a committee of teachers agreed on the texts to be adopted.

GUIDELINES SPECIFIC TO THE HIGH SCHOOL

The high school ESOL team is led by an experienced teacher who is continually engaged in refining and improving the program. For example, during the fall of 1995, advanced level LEP students are offered an experimental program--enrollment in regular ninth grade English, math, science and social studies courses, plus two extra periods for ESOL support and reading in the content areas.

Important to the high school assessment of LEP student progress, is the practice of gathering information in student portfolios for review by the staff. This allows teachers to judge and compare student readiness to enroll in more mainstream classes. Teachers meet to define expectations and to decide which students will take group tests and which students will continue to need individual monitoring. Language proficiency level determines the courses scheduled for a student and the amount of time profitably spent in regular classes. Ultimately, work samples and

data in the portfolios are sent to the Center for Language Assessment for review by the Program Coordinator.

The high school ESOL staff also undertook a textbook adoption, after piloting some texts, and final selections were made in the spring of 1994. A strong recommendation for books students could take home was one of the adoption criteria while the overuse of workbooks was strongly discouraged.

All students in the program at Liberty High School use the technology-based Resource Room set up with computers and a variety of appropriate software. A year of preparation was needed to familiarize staff with the technology and teachers were allowed to take computers home over the summer of 1995 to develop strategies for using the software to the fullest advantage of the ESOL students.

The high school is developing a mentoring model, still in the planning stages, which will employ both student and adult mentors.

PROGRAM CHANGES DURING THE FIRST TWO YEARS

1. Middle Schools

Three changes were made in the middle school program after the first year. Beginner level LEP students who showed progress at the end of fifth grade were offered the opportunity to enroll in their neighborhood middle school instead of being transported to another school for special, self-contained classes, thus reducing the number of students to be bused. The category "low-schooled," described previously in this article, was dropped at the recommendation of building administrators, with students in this category now placed in beginner level classes in the middle schools. In cases where these students are unable to adjust to school norms of behavior, an alternative placement is made.

One additional modification was the establishment at one middle school of a requirement that certain limited-English students attend the extra period provided at the end of the school day--an extended day program. This session includes supervision of homework completion and notebook requirements, providing more structure for students who are at risk of failing.

2. Staff Development

In-service training during the first year of the new program was intense. Regular meetings were held to discuss concerns and develop a common understanding of goals, procedures, and strategies for instruction by all regular classroom teachers

working with language minority students. Monthly meetings were held with the elementary school ESOL teachers during the first year, and quarterly during the second year. Secondary school teachers met for the purpose of text adoption and also to discuss the evaluation procedures and to learn successful teaching strategies.

The most successful staff development option was a 15-hour series of after-school sessions led by master ESL teachers which provided one graduate credit for participants. The first year one fifteen hour session was offered; the second year four different sessions were provided, of which two were sessions in the use of computer technology with students learning English.

3. Other Changes

Parent understanding of district goals for limited-English students is important to the success of any program, especially one that is taking a radically new departure. In November, 1994 and March, 1995, a newsletter was published to explain the program to parents, and to highlight staff and student accomplishments.

Funds are now allocated for a four-week summer program in ESOL for beginner level students. The addition of this component to the regular school year program provides extra learning time and, more importantly, the maintenance and strengthening of English language skills over the summer.

The Bethlehem district funds a full-time, bilingual secretary to manage the Center for Language Assessment office, a vital link to parents and community members. The bilingual secretary also organizes in-take services and retesting, collects student data, and brings parental concerns to the attention of the English Acquisition Program Coordinator.

The Program Coordinator is a consistent advocate for the integration of LEP students in regular education, and coordinates planning and in-service between ESOL teachers and regular classroom teachers. Liaison between special education services and the English Acquisition Program is essential for the proper referral of students for special help. Every effort is made by the Program Coordinator to avoid the retention of these students in grade or of their placement in special education unless very clear data supports such measures. The over-representation of language minority students in special education programs is a national problem. (Benavides, 1988).

DESIGN OF FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE EVALUATION

1. Literature Review

While a considerable literature has been published over the past decade on the variables that result in "effective schools" (Trueba, 1984), there is a minimal amount of useful data available to school administrators and teachers on how to handle a sudden influx of limited-English students. Various studies address the issues to a limited degree. Reulzel & Hollingsworth (1988) maintain that all students must be respected and trusted as competent learners who already know a great deal prior to any formal teaching, and that any program for language minority students must be relevant, functional and meaningful. Benderson (1988) asserts that the underlying cause for the high dropout rate of culturally diverse students was directly related to poor elementary and secondary education, and that for students of Spanish-speaking backgrounds, the problem is primarily a function of socioeconomic status and poor education in the second language.

Gringas & Careager (1989) found evidence that the reason for lower achievement in reading and mathematics for students from language minority families was a lack of competence in English. Scott (1985) states that home language may be a variable in the educational process of the language minority student solely due to the stigma attached to not speaking English. He further stated that if nothing is done to help children to become effective speakers of standard English, these students will be severely limited in their educational achievement.

2. Bethlehem's Program Features

Bethlehem's English Acquisition Program contains all of the features identified by Lucas and colleagues (1990) as contributing to the success of language minority students. Staff and administration place value on the students' home languages and cultures. There are high expectations for the academic achievement of limited-English students. Staff development is explicitly designed to help teachers meet the needs of language minority students more effectively. Variations in the implementation of the program are permitted, allowing each school to respond to the specific needs of its own student population. A guidance program includes bilingual counselors that give special attention to limited-English students. Parents of these students are encouraged to become involved in their children's education. Perhaps, most importantly, there is a core of staff members in each school that is strongly committed to the empowerment of language minority students through educational opportunity.

While individual teachers can and do make significant differences in the progress of individual LEP students, it is most likely that consistently superior results occur

when programs are carefully developed, refined, and modified through the involvement of all staff members. Program modifications, in Bethlehem, are carried out through the joint efforts of the staff and university evaluators.

The Bethlehem district's strong commitment to quality programming is evident in the fact that they have instituted both formative and summative evaluations of the English Acquisition Program. One of the most significant questions to be asked in evaluating any intervention program is whether the strategies involved are efficient in achieving the goals of the program. Programs for limited-English students have consistently lacked strong summative evaluation components, and almost always fail to include any formative evaluation information as part of the refinement process. Frequently, there is very little descriptive information available on a program, making comparisons among programs largely impossible.

3. Bethlehem's Evaluation Design

Trueba (1987) identifies two major theoretical approaches employed in examining the education of language minority students: 1) cultural-ecological approaches examining broad sociological factors; and 2) context-specific approaches relating the design and implementation of teaching and learning activities to achievement. Bethlehem staff, working with university researchers, are using an evaluation design which includes both of these approaches. Longitudinal studies which follow students after high school graduation are virtually non-existent, hence Bethlehem plans to follow the graduates of the English Acquisition Program over an extended period of time. It is only through the collection of this type of data that we can validly study the impact of various program on the lives of language minority students.

Any program serving language minority students is entwined in a web of complex variables including developmental levels related to teaching strategies and learning; learning processes related to language and culture; curriculum issues; and sociopolitical influences. The only means for assuring an understanding of the impact of programs on students is through extensive quantitative and qualitative studies. Thus, the formative evaluation of the English Acquisition Program provides information on the extent to which the program is implemented as designed; the impact of the program on student achievement; the strengths and weaknesses of the program from the perspectives of staff, administration and the evaluation team; and an extensive description of the program from an interdisciplinary perspective.

A formative and summative program evaluation design was developed as an integral part of the Bethlehem Area School District English Acquisition Program by the co-authors of this essay. Data collected in the formative evaluation allows for the

discovery and correction of unsatisfactory components of the program and provides a vehicle for systemically surveying staff and parent concerns.

During the first two years of the program, parent and teacher surveys and a qualitative responsive evaluation were primarily focused on developing an ethnography of the program that would then be compared with the description in *A Ticket for Tomorrow*, and to theory and research on language minority education. Two surveys were administered: one which examined staff and administrators' attitudes and perceptions of the English Acquisition program after its first year of operation; and the other which sought information from parents (and guardians) of students in the English Acquisition Program as to their impressions of the program over the same time span. The surveys were both administered in November, 1994.

In addition, an extended study was conducted in April and May of 1995 to determine the extent of divergence from the original plan by the Program Design Team, and to gauge the perceptions of staff and administrators on the staff development that would best support program goals. The results of this qualitative participant observation study as well as preliminary data on student progress in reaching higher English proficiency levels will be discussed in the final section of this article. An extensive report with data specific to individual program sites will be provided to the district at a later date and will include specific recommendations for program improvement.

At this time, a longitudinal summative evaluation of student achievement is projected, including data on participation in high school extra-curricular activities, and post-graduation activities of the students who entered the English Acquisition Program from its onset in September, 1993. The Bethlehem district's data base allows for the maintenance of such a large number of variables on each student but these might be confounding factors in measuring the overall success of the English Acquisition Program.

Filemaker Pro (Claris Corporation, 1990) was used to create a relational data base for the English Acquisition Program. Initial registration and testing information on each student is entered into the master file. An individual student "event file" contains information from each first and last quarter evaluation throughout the student's time in the English Acquisition Program. Other data related to student progress such as student withdrawals from and returns to the district, transfers within the district, special education placements, high school activities, course grades, achievement test scores, leadership activities, etc. are also entered in the data base. This data base model is useful for program evaluation as well as for assessment of student performance over a period of years, controlling for a number of variables.

If other districts would adopt a similar evaluation model--regardless of program type--a substantial data base for meta-analysis of findings on language minority education would become available to researchers and educators for planning purposes. One of the serious problems in the development of quality education for language minority students has been the ambiguity of research studies. These inconclusive results are confusing to district administrators, many of whom are not experts in either research design or statistics. Much of the failure in bilingual education research studies rests on the fact that so few studies have applied the fundamentals of reliable education research: random assignment, control groups, and statistical control for variables.

RESULTS OF INITIAL SURVEYS

An analysis of the information collected in the two surveys administered at the end of the first year of the new program reveals that: 1) the majority of staff and parents have a positive attitude toward the English Acquisition Program and its goals; 2) there is considerable agreement among staff as to which components of the program would benefit from refinement and change; and 3) there is also agreement among teachers as to the most useful focus and structure of future staff development topics. It is important to note that as with all survey data, these findings must be interpreted with caution, due to well-documented validity and reliability problems inherent in survey data (Gronlund, 1976).

The English Acquisition Program Coordinator devised the questions for the two surveys to obtain useful information for program modification and improvement. The surveys were designed to be brief so that respondents could complete them easily and quickly, and would be more likely to return them. The results of the surveys are a fair indicator of the degree to which the program is supported by teachers, administrators and parents; and an efficient way of finding out how the English Acquisition Program should be improved.

Staff Perceptions of Student Progress

The responses of the teachers and administrators to each of the ten questions on the survey were analyzed separately using descriptive statistics whenever possible, and using narratives when the survey questions did not lend themselves to statistical description. The results of the survey provided the district with the following information as to the perceptions of the professional staff in the district including regular classroom teachers, administrators, specialist teachers and ESOL teachers:

- 39 percent of the professional staff responding to the survey reported that "most" or "all" of the language minority students participating in the program had "made substantial progress toward the goal of acquiring English fluency" during the first year of the program

- 23 percent of the professional staff indicated that they believed that "more than half" of the students in the program were making substantial progress in acquiring fluency in English

- 25 percent of the staff asserted that language minority students were making "some progress" in acquiring English language fluency

- Only 13 percent of the respondents perceived students as making "little" or "no progress" in developing English fluency during the first year of the new program.

The responses to this question indicate that the majority of the professional staff in the district view the English Acquisition Program as successful, even during the first year of its implementation. It would appear that the professional staff of the district has not only accepted the curriculum change for LEP students, but has come to view it as the appropriate approach even though there was initial resistance to the new program by some of the staff prior to its implementation.

Evaluators believe that it will be important to ask this same question of teachers and administrators each year during the program's formative stage to monitor any changes in attitudes. A significant increase or decrease in positive attitudes might be an indicator of the impact of modifications on the program's effectiveness, or of attitude changes as staff gains more experience in working with limited-English students. This information will be useful in monitoring not only attitude change as staff members become more familiar with and thus more comfortable with the program, but can be correlated to program refinement changes to determine if the changes are in fact valid or successful in the staff's perception.

The evaluators also believe, based on well-documented research on the nature of second language acquisition and the learning of school subjects (Ramirez, 1991), that it is not valid to judge the program impact only by achievement scores on annual standardized tests, but that subsequent surveys of staff on this question should be conducted.

The high percentage of positive responses on the items in the staff survey regarding the new program, as well as on the parent questionnaire, must be understood in the context of widely different reactions in the school community when the new initia-

tive was announced (the change from a native language instruction model to an English-language immersion model). The socio-political situation in Bethlehem at the time of the innovation did not favor the "halo effect" that frequently accompanies educational changes. Instead, it was necessary to overcome the negative reaction and publicity that was first associated with the English Acquisition Program.

The present strong staff and parent support for the program after its first year of operation must be credited at least in part to the sensitivity of the district administrators. Involvement of teaching staff in the actual development of the program helped to bring about the cooperation of the majority of staff in carrying it out. In order to gain support of all elements, a conscious effort was made to avoid negative comments about the previous program.

Time Necessary to Acquire Informal English Skills

Sixty-seven percent of the respondents to the staff questionnaire indicated that they believe it takes the LEP student between two and three years to become proficient in basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) in a second language (Cummins, 1981). Sixteen percent of the staff indicated that they believe it only takes one year for LEP students to become proficient in informal social discourse in English. Together, 83 percent of the teachers and administrators who responded to this question on the survey asserted that language minority children could become proficient in basic social language skills between one and three years after they enter the English Acquisition Program in the district.

It must be recognized that these responses are presently based on staff's observations of student language learning not only during the first year of the English Acquisition Program, but during the years when some of these teachers worked with students in the former Spanish-language instruction program. It is essential that teaching staff be surveyed again in three to four years to determine if their responses to this question have changed significantly.

There was no significant difference in the responses to this item by staff working in low, medium and high impact schools. After the English Acquisition Program has been in operation for several years, teachers may report differently. For example, we may find that language minority students in low impact schools, where a majority of the student body speaks only English, will become fluent in basic social language more rapidly than language minority students in medium or high impact schools. It is also important to point out that the Bethlehem teaching staff are knowledgeable enough about the second language learning process to understand the difference between the language skills necessary for informal communication

and those required for cognitive and academic learning. Classroom teachers working with limited-English students often do not have adequate training for teaching LEP students and these teachers are generally unfamiliar with Cummins theory of BICS and CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency). The fact that all respondents to the survey answered this question indicates that teachers in the Bethlehem district have had significantly more training in the area of second language acquisition and language minority education than is typically found in public school systems.

Time Needed to Acquire Cognitive/Academic Language

Eighty-seven percent of the staff responding to the survey stated that it takes three or more years for language minority students "to become sufficiently proficient in the English necessary for academic success," while 47 percent believed that it might take four or more years to achieve this proficiency level in English which, according to Cummins (1981), is a prerequisite for learning in the content areas. Again, it is reasonable to suppose that the respondents are making these assertions based on their earlier experiences in the bilingual program and this does not reflect what the respondents are actually seeing in the new English Acquisition Program.

This question of the rate of second language learning for academic purposes is a contentious one which will be surveyed again in the coming years to gauge differences of opinion. It is important to obtain data on whether the English Acquisition Program itself has an impact upon the rate at which LEP students acquire English language proficiency for social and academic purposes. Staff responses to these two questions, at present, generally support the Cummins hypotheses on learning rate for BICS and CALP.

Staff Perceptions of Parent Reactions

Forty-one percent of the teachers and administrators reported that parents of both language minority and language majority children offered neither oral nor written reaction to the new English Acquisition Program; 31 percent said that parental reaction to the program was "mostly positive" or "favorable;" while only 6 percent of the staff saw reactions from parents as "negative."

The responses to this question were interesting when compared to a question in the parent survey in which the majority of parents asserted that they received no information on the English Acquisition Program before or during the 1993-1994 school year. It is possible that some parents may not have been aware of changes taking place in the bilingual program which would explain their lack of commentary. It may also be hypothesized that some of the language minority parents did not have

the literacy skills necessary to comprehend materials sent home or information reported by the media.

Staff Perceptions of Curriculum Adaptation

Staff was also surveyed as to its perceptions of the degree to which regular classroom teachers adapted curriculum to meet the needs of the limited-English students, an acknowledged priority of the program administrators. The question posed was, "How often and how well is this being done?" Sixty-nine percent of the survey respondents answered that curriculum was "often" adapted to meet the needs of the language minority students; 24 percent asserted that this took place "regularly," and 17 percent said that adaptation took place "always." Allowing for differences in individual teacher's operational definitions of each of these terms, it is clear that teachers do recognize the need to adapt curriculum to improve the learning opportunities of language minority students.

However, the question of the strategies most useful for making this adaptation is a topic that needs to be investigated in order that the district may eventually correlate student achievement with specific strategies, techniques and /or materials employed by classroom teachers, and so that teachers may be subsequently trained on the value and use of these specific strategies. Such data will be of high value to practitioners in other districts as well.

It is interesting to note that regular classroom teachers' and ESOL teachers' responses to the question of curriculum adaptation were significantly different and that the responses of regular classroom teachers and ESOL teachers from high vs. medium and low impact schools also differed. ESOL teachers did not see the necessary curriculum adaptations being made as frequently as the classroom teachers believed it to be occurring; and both teaching staff in regular classrooms and ESOL teachers at high impact schools reported a greater amount of curriculum adaptation than those at low and medium impact schools.

Moreover, ESOL teachers at low and medium impact schools did not feel that there was always an appropriate amount of curriculum adaptation occurring in the regular classrooms. Many ESOL teachers made comments to this effect in the narrative response questions in the survey. Respondents from high impact schools were twice as likely to describe curriculum adaptation as occurring "often," "regularly," or "always" as respondents from the low or medium impact schools. This variable of curriculum adaptation warrants careful study in order to determine what types of curriculum adaptation are most useful for facilitating the English acquisition and academic success of language minority students. This is an example of an instance

in which formative data analysis has lead to the development of a quasi-experimental design study, allowing for the identification of instructional strategies affecting student achievement and self-esteem.

The recent adoption of a literature-based reading program in place of traditional basal readers in the elementary school should facilitate the elementary level teachers' efforts to adapt curriculum, and, at the same time, provide data about effective strategies.

The Bethlehem district and other districts with LEP students would also benefit from a determination of the types of curriculum adaptation that are most effective at different levels of English proficiency. That is, it would be useful to know if a particular strategy is generally effective at one fluency level, for example the intermediate level, but of very little use at the advanced level.

Curriculum adaptation also needs to be studied in relation to its impact on different types of classroom structures such as the self-contained classrooms in elementary school vs. the departmentalized model of the middle school, or the teacher-centered vs. the child-centered classroom. Finally, it must be noted that even in a classroom made up entirely of English speakers, there is still a need for making curriculum adaptations based on individual students' learning styles, personal interests, prior academic successes or failures. This question should be posed in subsequent surveys when the teachers have become more accustomed to the English Acquisition Program and the new reading/language arts program. Any other new program adopted in the district such as "developmentally appropriate practices" (Bredekemp, 1987) will have an impact on the way in which curriculum adaptation is carried out in different schools.

Staff Responses to Open-ended Questions

Several open-ended questions were also posed in the survey and resulted in interesting and useful information that became part of the focus of the participant observational data collection conducted in spring, 1995. The open-ended questions elicited multiple responses; that is, an overwhelming majority (99%) of the respondents gave more than one answer to each question. Some clear generalizations were represented among the responses which are here outlined:

1. Eighty-five percent of the respondents noted that the ESOL teachers themselves are of paramount importance to the success of the English Acquisition Program. Many respondents specifically cited the high degree of collaboration between ESOL and classroom teachers as the reason for the progress made in successfully implementing this program.

2. Teachers repeatedly noted (30%) that cooperation among student peers in the form of the "buddy" system, cooperative learning groups, and paired reading also contributed to the progress that had been made in English language learning.

3. Approximately 50% of the staff made reference to the degree to which curriculum flexibility is permitted as a factor in the success of the program. From the unstructured narrative response format of the survey, it was impossible to determine if this "flexibility" referred to the ability to individualize curriculum, or that teachers in the English Acquisition Program tend to be more flexible. Subsequent interviews with staff in May and June, 1995, clarified the responses to mean that the staff's freedom to make changes necessary to their specific classroom situation was a crucial factor contributing to the success of students in the program.

4. Approximately 20% of the respondents to the survey credited the support of administrators as contributing to the progress made by students during the first year of the new program.

5. While 10% of the staff asserted that in-service training was a factor that contributed to the program's success, "lack of in-service training" was listed as a program weakness by 20% of the respondents. This response pattern may indicate that the staff training conducted prior to the start of the new program was relevant and useful, but that as teachers become more aware of student needs, they detected gaps in their own training.

Perhaps the training program should become multidimensional. It appears that as teachers discover their need for specific types of information on how second language learning occurs, on how to make curriculum adaptations, and on classroom strategies suitable for different age levels, they become convinced of the need for additional training on topics quite different from what had been planned. Clearly, experienced teachers have a more sophisticated understanding of the variables that have an impact on the learning of ESL students and, therefore, are more likely to seek out additional training opportunities.

It is recommended that future staff development workshops be focused on the specific problems and needs outlined by regular classroom teachers and ESOL teachers themselves. Additionally, a minimum level of training should be mandatory for all Bethlehem district personnel including such topics as second language acquisition theory, curriculum adaptation, and cultural sensitivity, and this training should be ongoing.

Later interviews with teachers revealed another concern: while the in-service training was valued, there was no chance for teachers to discuss with their workshop leaders what actually happened in their classrooms when they applied their new strategies. It may be necessary to build in some follow-up time in the next round of training sessions.

6. Parent involvement and parent education was viewed as very important to student progress by Bethlehem staff.

In many of the low-impact and medium impact schools the lack of such parental involvement was considered an impediment to student success during the first year of the program. Teachers at high impact schools felt that parent involvement was greater than did the staff at the low impact and medium impact schools. Closer analysis through ethnographic interviewing of staff indicated that at the neighborhood schools which served a large Latino population and where Spanish had been the primary language of instruction, the parent participation contributed positively to students' progress.

In some of the medium impact and low impact schools, staff felt a need for greater parental involvement. It would be useful to find out what is inhibiting parent involvement in these buildings, and to devise appropriate plans to encourage more involvement at each home school. Administrators should also determine if the language minority students' parents fail to become actively involved in the community school due to a lack of fluency in English and to decide if the availability of translators would result in increased participation by these parents. Providing transportation might increase the likelihood of parents attending daytime or evening activities at the school. The home-school connection has been highly encouraged by all the Bethlehem schools in the past, and the demonstration of respect for the home language and culture has always been, and continues to be, a strong point of the district's program. There also has been a concerted effort to hire teachers and staff who can communicate with parents in Spanish. It was impossible to determine from the survey responses if the complaints about the lack of parent involvement were directed at ethnic groups other than the Latino parents, but this possibility will also need to be examined.

7. Many respondents to the staff survey made comments about the advantages of heterogeneous grouping, the use of a literature-based approach, and students attending school in their own neighborhood as positive steps.

There seemed to be some confusion among staff as to the differences between literature-based programs and whole language programs. Later observations indi-

cated that the majority of teachers are using the literature-based approach, but not an integrated curriculum, while there was evidence of whole language use by many of the elementary teachers.

It is very likely that students studying and playing together after school, as a direct consequence of their attending their neighborhood schools, will find greater opportunities for social interactions in English and this interaction, therefore, will encourage the integration of the language minority student into the English-speaking peer groups. The LEP child enrolled in the English Acquisition Program thus has the opportunity for daily communication experiences in English both in the contextually-bound language of play, and the less contextually- bound language of the classroom.

A high level of agreement among staff on the problems that need to be addressed in order for the English Acquisition Program to function effectively. Class size was indicated by over 50 percent of the respondents as a problem in spite of the class reductions provided in the original district plan. However, it is important to note that in most surveys of teachers, class size is viewed as a significant factor in their degree of satisfaction with their work; thus, it is unlikely that this response is solely due to the implementation of the English Acquisition Program. Both ESOL teachers and regular classroom teachers overwhelmingly viewed class size as the most pressing problem facing the program. This is not a problem unique to districts in which there are large numbers of ESOL students, but a general concern in the field of education across grade levels and geographic areas. Since class size in the Bethlehem schools is within the average range nationally, this problem is not a particular concern of the English Acquisition Program but of the school district at large.

Other problems raised by a number of teachers responding to the survey included: distinguishing between learning disabilities and second language learning; the problem of some LEP students who can read aloud in English but have difficulty comprehending what they have read; the problem of providing adequate education for transient children; the classroom disruptions due to children entering the program at all times of the year; the lack of student motivation; and the problem of ESOL teachers and classroom teachers not having sufficient time to work collaboratively at low impact schools. Only three of the respondents felt that learning the second language and content at the same time was far too much to expect from the students.

Some of these issues might best be addressed informally at the building level or at staff meetings at either the building or district level. In the case of issues that cannot be easily resolved such as student motivation, student assessment, or curricu-

lum adaptation strategies, a task committee could be formed to investigate specific concerns and issues related to each problem. It is frequently impossible to isolate variables that affect the learning environment in general from conditions that have an impact only on language minority students.

One way of helping teachers who face the challenge of teaching both at-risk children and young people whose knowledge of English is limited might be the organization of a "Supportive Learning Group," through which university personnel would train resident "experts" in each building in the district. Those teachers designated resident "experts" would meet regularly to discuss concerns and problems and to share strategies and successes. Teacher "experts" could call on the support of the university for suggestions on alternative strategies, to observe classrooms, and even to model teaching techniques.

Surprisingly, there was little agreement among teachers as to which strategies help students learn English, with two notable exceptions. Over 50 percent of the teacher respondents asserted that the buddy system of peer tutoring was helpful. Other strategies and methodologies cited in order of their frequency included: putting up labels in English in the classroom, teacher modeling, use of visuals, concrete hands-on experiences; repetition, predictable stories, the new reading program; cooperative learning groups; the Total Physical Response (TPR) approach; pre-reading lessons by ESOL teachers; accommodating different learning styles; demonstrating respect for home language and cultures; teaching assistants helping groups of beginners in English; show and tell methods, individual help, curriculum adaptation, and command/request drill. Art oriented activities, vocabulary development, a safe environment for risk taking in the language classroom, oral reading in teams, parent involvement, body language, rainbow words, and sentence strips were all cited by two or more respondents.

Subsequent qualitative observations indicated that the teachers were in fact using all of these strategies to different degrees, but that many techniques were being ignored by teachers who responded to this survey item. This was an indication that perhaps teachers have not yet acquired metacognitive knowledge of what works best with language minority students.

In like manner, participant observation indicated that there is great variability in teaching strategies and techniques employed by the district's classroom and ESOL teachers. Making teachers aware of strategies that have been demonstrated to work, and the appropriate ways and times to use such strategies would be an important addition to staff training and to the literature on education of language minority

students in general. The authors of this article plan to develop and validate an instrument to identify teaching strategies, and also design a study to gather data on these variables. It may be appropriate to train teachers in the use of action research to determine which strategies are most effective with their particular students.

It was interesting that curriculum adaptation was not listed more frequently as a strategy for improving students acquisition of English when considerable attention and emphasis has been placed on this strategy in staff development training and in the criteria for program success. Later observations in numerous classrooms supported the contention that this very important strategy is not yet fully understood by all staff working with LEP students in the district and that there is great variability among teachers as to the degree to which curriculum adaptation occurs and the specific strategies employed. It was evident after observations of classrooms were conducted that different philosophies of education have a strong impact on the particular strategies emphasized, and that teachers differ widely in their commitment to a child-centered curriculum philosophy (Cuban, 1993).

When teachers were asked what they personally learned about the language acquisition process during the first year of the implementation of the English Acquisition Program, responses were largely personal and were seldom corroborated by the responses of colleagues. Most teachers who had not previously worked with LEP students in the regular classroom found the new program a challenging but extremely rewarding professional endeavor. Since many staff members chose not to respond to this item and since responses were "personal" opinions and quite varied, generalizations are not possible.

Parent Responses to Survey

The responses of the parents of students in the English Acquisition program were analyzed using descriptive statistics whenever possible and by using narrative analysis in the remainder of the questions. The first two questions requested demographic data including the school that the child attends and the child's grade level. A total of 276 responses were analyzed. Two of the response sheets were unintelligible and not included in the analysis. Parents or guardians of every student enrolled in the English Acquisition Program received the survey along with a letter explaining its purpose. Directions for completing and returning the survey in both English and Spanish were included, and parents were encouraged to respond in either language.

Pre-addressed, stamped envelopes were included with the surveys and letters to encourage responses. Low levels of literacy among the parents resulted in a misunderstanding of some of the questions. The questions were developed by the district with the purpose of gaining specific information of interest in the formative stages of program refinement.

Eighty-one percent of the parent or guardian respondents indicated that they felt their child "progressed well academically" during the first year of the English Acquisition Program, while 7 percent of the parents responded that their child "did not make good progress" during the 1993-1994 school year. The remaining 12 percent of the parents or guardians did not respond at all to this question. Of this twelve percent, 10 percent had children who had been in kindergarten the previous year, or noted that they could not respond because their child attended another school district during the 1993-1994 school year. These parent results were extremely positive, considering the controversy initially associated with the program change.

Only 14 percent of the parents or guardians responded that their child had been absent more than 10 days during the 1993-1994 school year, while 71 percent responded that their child had not been absent 10 or more days, and 15 percent did not respond.

Parents' Perceptions of How Their Children Learn English

On a restricted choice item, 98 percent of the respondents recognized that English acquisition was developed through their child's participation in a variety of academic and social experiences in school. Sixty-eight percent of the parents or guardians responding to the survey indicated that lessons by their child's ESOL teacher "most helped" their child learn English; 67 percent said that a teacher who talked with students and encouraged them helped their child's learning of English. Fifty-six percent of the respondents asserted that providing children with the opportunity to take books home to read contributed to their gains in English language fluency, while 51 percent indicated that reading from books in English in school was a contributing factor in the child's learning of the English language. Twenty-two percent felt that their child's speaking with English-speaking peers helped him or her learn the language. Only two parents checked the item "none of these."

Parent Evaluation of the English Acquisition Program

Eighty-two percent of the respondents viewed the Bethlehem Area School District English Acquisition Program as "good" or "very good." This is an unusually high positive percentage rate for a survey by any standard and becomes even more impressive when considered in light of the negative climate that immediately preceded the adoption of the program. The writers believe that the teachers and administrators are to be commended for the time and effort spent on the introduction of the program to parents and guardians.

Twelve percent of the respondents found the program either "adequate" or "satisfactory," only 1 percent of the respondents considered the program "poor," and five percent did not respond to this item.

Parent Reports on Children's Problems at School

Twenty-three percent of the respondents indicated that their child had difficulties in school during the 1993-1994 term, chiefly identifying two categories: behavioral problems (11%) and academic problems (12%). The behavior problems were largely reported by parents of students in the middle school or high school (93%). Academic problems outlined by parents appeared to be centered on reading difficulties when they so specified, but in most cases they did not give this information so that generalizations could not be made.

Unfortunately, parents were not asked how they became aware of their children's difficulties (e.g., child told parents, parent observations, teacher told parents). In future, account will be taken of the types and frequency of difficulties experienced by LEP students who are in, or have exited from, the English Acquisition Program. Such data will give teachers and administrators more realistic expectations for student behavior and achievement.

Surprisingly, 85 percent of the parents and guardians indicated that they had received no information on the new program during its first year of operation, 13 percent said they had received "some" information on the program, and 2 percent did not respond to the item. It will be necessary to produce an information packet that can be routinely distributed to parents or guardians at the time of enrollment, clearly delineating the goals and nature of the English Acquisition Program. This proposed program guide should be available not only in English and Spanish, but also translated into the major languages of the students in the district. The Bethlehem Area School District has consistently made efforts to maintain strong parent-school communication and involvement and it certainly remains one of the objectives of the English Acquisition Program. The district needs to find out why so few parents and guardians acknowledged the receipt of information on the program.

The potential of a "Home Language and Culture Resource Center" which would keep track of translators for a variety of languages and information on cultural and religious diversity norms would be an extremely important resource for teachers and administrators alike. For example, in working with a school district in Philadelphia which has a largely Asian population, a student teacher found that memos or letters sent home to parents in general seldom were responded to, but

that letters addressed by name to the male head of the household were always responded to with courtesy (personal communication, February, 1995).

Parents' School Visits

Eighty-one percent of the parents indicated that they had visited their child's school during the first year of the new program. This may explain the response to the previous question, as parents may have learned of the new program during school visits and at open house meetings scheduled early in the school year, and thus "received" no printed information on the English Acquisition Program. This high rate of visitation is commendable because many of the language minority parents do not have personal transportation available and must therefore make special arrangements.

Fifty-three percent of the parents responded that they had attended a conference with their child's teacher during the 1993-1994 school year, 25 percent responded "no" and 12 percent failed to respond to the question. There was a strong correlation between the grade level of student and parental attendance, with parents of younger elementary students attending conferences more frequently than parents of children in other grades, a characteristic pattern of parents in general.

Eighty-six percent of the respondents replied that they would like to receive a regular newsletter about the English Acquisition Program; 4 percent answered "no" to this item and 10 percent did not respond to it. Twenty-eight percent of the parents who responded that they would like to receive a newsletter added "en español" (in Spanish) after their responses. This newsletter was published in the 1994-1995 school year in English and Spanish.

There was general consensus in the response to the question "What can we do to improve the English Acquisition Program?" that improvements should focus on providing more and better opportunities for promoting the students' learning of English, including "after school tutoring," "a summer program," and "more homework." Other suggestions offered by five or more respondents included "providing English classes for parents," and "sending home more information to parents."

SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

Analyses of the data provided from these surveys show strong support for the English Acquisition Program by a majority of teachers, administrators, and parents in the district. Refinement of the program's implementation through the use of formative evaluation analyses should serve to increase this support, as both staff and parents will be consistently asked to express concerns and to suggest program improvements.

One of the most important uses of the data from the teachers' and administrators' responses to the survey is the valuable information for planning staff development. It was evident from the responses of teachers that they see the need for on-going professional development as they come to recognize the complexity of educating language minority students in mainstream classrooms. Research has previously indicated that even experienced, expert classroom teachers may not necessarily be effective with ESOL students (Enright, 1986; Lucas, Heinze & Donato, 1990). It appears that the traditional "one-shot" workshop may address some issues in the education of language minority students but does not provide sufficient modeling and follow-up to give teachers the skills and confidence to try new strategies.

Many new elements have an impact on the effective planning and delivery of instruction for language minority students (e.g., understanding first and second language development; changing beliefs, attitudes, and values toward language minority students; complexities of academic and social integration of language minority students into mainstream settings, etc.). A series of workshops should be planned which begin with a general survey of linguistic principles and of second language acquisition, followed by sessions on specific strategies for teaching both subject matter content and English language. This progression from theory to practical application would provide a schema enabling teachers to become more reflective practitioners and problem solvers.

Parents of language minority students, while generally satisfied with the program, displayed a new self-confidence in their relations with the schools by their willingness to ask for additional services for their children. Parents are requesting additional tutoring, English classes for parents, newsletters in Spanish, and generally express the desire to fully participate in their children's education. The Bethlehem district, historically, has encouraged parent involvement, knowing that the positive effects of the relationship between parent involvement and academic achievement are well documented (e.g., Bermudez & Padron, 1987; Epstein, 1990). School districts can no longer assume that all parents understand district or school building expectations for parent participation. Immigrant parents may not have an understanding of the value of parent involvement (Ogbu, 1990). Cultural attitudes on such issues as discipline in the schools, homework, parent visits to schools vary greatly among ethnic groups and may not reflect a lack of parental interest in school affairs but a genuine need for parents of language minority children to be "educated" to the expectations of U.S. schools.

A proactive, multi-level approach such as that of Faltis (1993) which was based on the works of Pettit (1980) and Rasinski and Fredericks (1989) would be a valuable

investment of time and resources for any district implementing an English Acquisition Program. Some of the Bethlehem teachers who are new to this population need to learn more about the parents' communities, their support systems, and the stress factors that have an impact on the lives of families living in a new country or community. Informal gatherings or small group meetings in the school or in community centers might be more welcoming than the traditional PTA meeting, for example, which can be intimidating for a parent who speaks little or no English and has not yet made friends in the local area. Teacher contacts with families should occur early in the school year and it would to be worthwhile knowing the cultural protocols of the community if a positive relationship is to be established with parents or guardians. Training in cultural sensitivity will help and having access to translators is essential.

The second level of interaction proposed by Faltis (1993) involves keeping parents informed by telephone calls or written communication, or informal conferences, on a variety of topics such as basic school policies, the English Acquisition Program goals and practices, upcoming school events, the child's progress, and numerous other topics that parents are typically interested in. Whenever possible, this information should be given in the home language by native speakers. The quarterly newsletter established by the English Acquisition Program Office is an excellent example of this type of communication. In addition, some of the schools also have their own newsletters that are translated into Spanish and sent home. Personal notes from teachers are also well-received by parents in the district.

Hakuta (1990) demonstrated that students in the third grade and higher are very capable of translating from their native language to English and vice versa. The focus of this second level of involving the students' parents should be to broaden the base of communication (Faltis, 1993). As soon as parents respond to school communications, they should be invited to participate in classroom and school-related activities, a third level of parent involvement. Faltis (1990) believes that the activities parents learn about in the classroom can be transferred to helping their children with school tasks at home. If lack of transportation hinders parent participation, a parent committee could be developed in each building to resolve the problem.

Finally, at level four, parents are encouraged to become active decision makers in the school. Rasinski and Fredericks (1989) call this level the "empowerment" level. While few parents may actually attain this level, those who do have the potential for becoming community representatives who can provide advice and support in dealing with other parents. A family literacy center is already an integral part of the district's services, as are GED (high school equivalency) programs in both English

and Spanish. The university evaluators believe that increasing parent involvement in the schools will increase the use of these services by the parents.

ON-SITE PROGRAM EVALUATION

Formative evaluation refers to the process of continually assessing, reviewing and modifying a program as it develops. Information gathered in this way allows continuous program improvement.

To obtain specific information about the implementation, impact, strengths and weaknesses of the English Acquisition Program after almost two years of operation, a qualitative evaluation was conducted by co-authors Simons-Turner and Connelly. Since the area of expertise of the one is linguistics and that of the other is education, the advantage of interdisciplinary perspectives in data interpretation afforded additional validity to the recommendations for program modification. Concomitant with the main goal of providing a "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) of the program as implemented, as well as recommendations for program refinement, the evaluators had a secondary goal of coordinating the data collected from the Bethlehem schools with data from models in two other districts to build a grounded theory of models of education designed to foster the development of fluency in English.

A "structured immersion" or "English Acquisition" model differs from school district to school district, and yet little attempt has been made to document specifically what such programs have in common and how they may differ. It is difficult to analyze what strategies and program models are most effective without accurate and detailed description that allows statistical results to be compared in a systematic manner. Such a grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) will provide important premises from which school districts that are facing the challenge of developing quality programs for language minority students may build their specially tailored models.

Grounded theory will also provide a foundation for quantitative research studies of the variables that have an impact on the successful implementation of such programs and this, in turn, will provide direction for future research. Interviews with teachers and administrators, participant observation, traditional observation and examination of documents outlining program goals and guidelines were employed in this evaluation to determine if the program is following the original plans of the design team and to make recommendations for improvements.

Procedures

Initial interviews were unstructured, and focused on gaining the informants' views of the program in general, its relative merits; informants' recommendations for changes in the program's design and implementation; and informants' perspectives on strategies that would facilitate students' learning of English and content area studies. Field notes from these initial interviews were coded openly, without theoretical control, through a "constant comparative" method of analysis (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, 101-115) to build a holistic description of the English Acquisition Program from the perspective of its staff, and to allow for maximum variation in data.

During the first stages of analysis each interview or observation was coded into tentative conceptual categories. Tentative categories of strengths and weaknesses were identified which were theoretically sampled (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) in the interviews of later informants. As expected, several categories which surfaced during the first phase of data collection were not supported through analyses of subsequent cycles of interviews and observations. For example, a category of "curriculum integration" emerged early in the evaluation process and remained an important consideration across interviews and observations in several elementary schools. However, observations and interviews in other elementary, middle and secondary schools revealed a great degree of variability from "complete integration" to "no integration" as to how this construct was operationalized in a particular classroom.

Review of interview notes, observation notes and program documents followed each encounter in the school settings. This cycle of data collection-coding elucidated critical connections between categories which emerged simultaneously. For example, important connections were established between curriculum integration, curriculum adaptation, and teaching strategies. Curriculum adaptation appeared to be related to teachers' knowledge of strategies to present content materials in multiple modalities. Curriculum integration appeared to facilitate curriculum adaptation; that is, curriculum adaptation was more readily observable in classrooms of teachers who used more integration of curriculum. At the same time, teachers who used integration of curriculum were more likely to adapt curriculum. Further analyses indicated that teachers in low and medium impact schools do more curriculum adaptation because they have fewer opportunities to collaborate with ESOL specialists.

Categories emerging from the data were noted and school similarities and differences in perceptions and behaviors indicated the interrelationships of categories. As the alternating coding, categorization, and data gathering continued, explo-

ration of interrelationships and delimitation of properties of categories of program strengths and weaknesses continued.

Throughout the evaluation process, some of the criteria used for assessing the validity of the data included: 1) solicited or unsolicited; 2) subject or not subject to evaluator influence; 3) directly stated or observed, or inferred; and 3) corroborated or not corroborated by subsequent observation or interviews.

Extensive traditional observations and participant-observations in the elementary, middle, and high school were made over a two month period in a representative sample of ESOL classrooms and regular classrooms. Because of the qualitative and formative intent of the evaluation, the two evaluators decided against using preconstructed observation instruments which might result in data that was too narrowly circumscribed to be representative of the whole program, but to make unstructured, detailed field notes as they observed. This approach had the advantage of appearing to be less evaluative and thus less threatening to individual teachers. Evaluators took great care to assure teachers that the program was being described and evaluated, not the teachers as individual professionals, and that their opinions are of paramount importance.

The majority of observations were conducted jointly to control for reliability and facilitate interdisciplinary analyses (80%). Unique and common teaching behaviors and student behaviors were noted, as were continuities and discontinuities among specific groups such as elementary, middle school and secondary settings; impact levels of schools, and students' levels of English proficiency.

Once major categories and themes had emerged and their properties were described, more abstract theoretical connections between and among categories were made. Theoretical sampling that proceeded around these emergent themes and related categories appeared to explain major processes related to program effectiveness and ineffectiveness. Data collection continued to the point at which all major categories were saturated (i.e., no new categories or properties of categories were forthcoming as a result of additional data collection). Also, all categories were corroborated by data obtained in an alternative fashion (i.e, interview, observation, survey).

Although data collection, coding and analysis led to an integrated, detailed set of variables and hypotheses about the English Acquisition Program, professional literature was consulted for models and paradigms to support the data. Besides specific information about the program, the observations and interviews have yielded a rich description which will be combined with data collected in two other Pennsylvania districts--Allentown and Reading--in a future study detailing the emergence of a

grounded theory of characteristics necessary for quality programs for limited-English students.

General On-Site Observations

One of the strengths of the English Acquisition Program is the manner in which the English language instruction has become a part of the school curriculum, giving students grade appropriate content and the English fluency necessary to become independent learners. The program was designed to supplement the regular district-wide curriculum, and every effort is made not to "water down" the content of the learning provided to LEP students. Teachers are afforded great flexibility in meeting the needs of their individual classrooms and individual students.

Across all grade levels from first through twelve, there is great variability among teachers as to the degree to which they actually adapt curriculum. It appears that while many teachers employ a range of readily recognizable ESOL techniques, whole language strategies, and more traditional strategies for content area instruction, others seem to struggle with the new approaches and resort to repetitive drills not related to content instruction. Evaluators found that ESOL teachers were consistently more adept at the task of adapting curriculum and preparing students for content learning. Elementary level regular classroom teachers for the most part were also competent in adapting curriculum. As might be expected, some teachers in the medium and low impact schools who are relatively new to working with limited-English student need more training on how to adapt curriculum for their students. There was greater variability among middle and high school teachers in handling the integration of curriculum.

While teachers' responses to the survey question on teaching strategies were extremely limited in scope, the evaluators, through observations and interviews, obtained a clearer picture of which strategies are most supportive of English-language learners. They were organized into the following conceptual categories:

1. teaching to students' prior experiences

2. providing strong academic content, relevant to students' backgrounds; using through exploration and hands-on methods

3. simultaneously emphasizing the four modalities of literacy in all content areas--listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing

4. validating students' personal experiences and culture, including their language, literature and art forms

5. using student-centered strategies

6. using strategies in which students engage in interactive techniques such as cooperative learning, pair work

7. modeling and providing activities that proceed from the concrete to the abstract

8. abundantly using supplementary materials made by teacher and students

9. using visuals and emphasizing concept development through graphic organizers, semantic maps

10. curriculum integration

11. curriculum adaptation.

These categorical concepts are supported by various research studies (Cummins, 1989; Laboo & Teale, 1990; Olson, 1988; Olson & Mullen, 1990; Urzua, 1990).

There was also great variability among teachers in taking advantage of curriculum integration. The use of integrated thematic units across content areas is especially effective in providing students with connections between existing schema and new knowledge. While the district has recently adopted literature-based anthologies for its reading and language arts curriculum, the degree to which teachers integrate literature with the other content areas such as social studies and science ranges from moderate to no use of integration . At the middle and high school levels, curriculum integration could measurably improve students' ability to deal successfully with content while acquiring English.

New Directions

In the 1995-1996 school year, one of the high impact elementary schools and one of the middle schools will pilot an integrated curriculum, and the evaluators expect to monitor student performance and teacher reactions at these sites to determine the immediate and long-range impact on the students' content and language learning. Classroom-by-classroom flexibility in program implementation is a reality in the Bethlehem district.

The Program Coordinator dictates basic keystones of the program such as curriculum adaptation, with the focus on meaningful experiences in reading, writing, speaking and listening comprehension in the elementary and middle schools. Exactly how this adaptation is carried out, though, is left largely to the judgment

of the building staff. Naturally, this results in a variety of approaches which will be assessed over time.

ESOL Teachers Recommend Modifications

Observations and interviews substantiated the survey results which had credited the success of the English Acquisition Program to the ESOL teachers. This dedicated core of professionals has been vital to the success of the program to date. These teachers demonstrated competence in using a wide variety of teaching strategies, providing their students with the background knowledge, vocabulary, support learning in the content areas, and information about the pragmatics of communication that make ESOL classes highly motivating. They were open in stating their concerns and questions to the evaluators, and were impressive in their ability to assess potential program refinements from a cost-benefit view.

While opinions varied from school to school, some of the concerns related to program refinement that were most often expressed by the ESOL teachers include:

1. the need for more time to collaborate, or a more effective means of collaborating, with the regular classroom teachers

2. the need for ESOL teachers to have more training in teaching reading to English language learners, as well as more training in the identification of the differences between second language learning and learning disabilities

3. the need for regular classroom teachers at all grade levels and especially those in low and medium impact schools to receive more training in second language acquisition and curriculum adaptation

4. more effort to be made to encourage parent involvement in low and medium impact schools.

ESOL teachers generally expressed satisfaction with the efforts of the regular classroom teachers and recognized the major adjustment that was being made by the staff members who had not previously worked with limited-English students. In previous years these students had been bused to other schools and segregated for native language instruction.

It is the belief of the evaluators that ESOL teachers are a valuable resource and they should be trained in leadership skills in order that they may become leaders of study support groups. The study support group is a model for staff development which was described earlier in this paper. It is also recommended that ESOL teachers be

encouraged to do peer observations within and outside of the district as part of their own professional development. ESOL teachers are encouraged to participate in national conferences and to write articles on their experiences, not only to gain recognition but to contribute to their profession at the state and national levels.

A final general observation about the level of cooperation observed by all staff members in the implementation of the English Acquisition Program is important to other districts considering the development of such a program. While "outside" experts are helpful in the development of a new program due to their broad knowledge and experience, the teaching staff must be actively involved in the design of any program from the conception of the program philosophy to the on-going modifications once the program is implemented. The enthusiasm of staff toward the program is largely dependent upon early participation.

The Bethlehem administration has successfully engaged the professional staff in developing a program based on sound theory with practical applications. While there is certainly room for improvement, as the following section of this article will outline, the level of cooperation of staff and administration is greatly increased when in-house expertise is recognized. As evaluators, we were consistently impressed by the honest and forthright evaluations of the present status of the programs in their buildings by teachers and administrators. Staff was regularly willing to share perceptions, concerns and achievements and eager for reactions from the evaluators.

Effective Program Administration

The Program Coordinator is important to the success of any innovation but especially to a program that began amid emotional and political controversy. The coordinator of the program serves not only as an administrator but also must provide leadership to a group of professionals with a variety of conflicting attitudes, viewpoints and agendas. Evaluators believe that the ability of the Program Coordinator to obtain resources and inspire cooperation from building administrators is highly correlated with the program's success.

The Program Coordinator outlined several issues that are beginning to be addressed to improve the program, which coincided with recommendations of the university evaluators. A committee including the head of Gifted Education and the Director of Special Education is studying ways of increasing nominations of LEP students to the district's gifted program. This committee is drafting guidelines and issuing new parent and staff evaluations to be used in identifying gifted, limited-English students. These will be reviewed by principals in the near future.

Teaching At-Risk Students in the Elementary Grades

Strategies are being developed for use with hard-to-teach students. In the case of students who are having very limited success in English reading and writing after one or two years in the ESOL program, they should be referred for other kinds of help. Schools try a variety of strategies including parent support, peer tutoring, and individual assistance from teacher aides.

One of the most dramatic successes for first grade students has been the Reading Recovery program. Students drawn from the lowest 20 percent of the first grade classes, including English learners, are given 20 weeks of daily instruction for 30 minutes by a trained Reading Recovery teacher. The majority of these students, who otherwise would have been retained in grade or referred for special education, have learned to read at average levels, and do not need further remediation. Follow-up studies show that these students maintain their success into second grade. Reading Recovery requires services from teachers who undertake a year long graduate class under the supervision of a trained teacher-leader.

Although skeptics did not believe that this program could help students at the beginner level of English language proficiency, results here and in New York City (see pages 17-20) demonstrate the success of the program by reporting gains in both reading and oral proficiency. This intervention is highly intensive and is reserved for the very hard-to-teach first grader. Additional Reading Recovery teachers will be trained in the 1995-96 school year, and other possibilities are also being considered.

The need for home reading materials that students can read with 90 percent accuracy is also an important consideration for future planning. Results of programs which provide home reading on a regular basis have demonstrated the improvement of oral language and literacy (Krashen, 1993).

Additional Features

Providing training to all staff in multicultural approaches and fostering positive relationships among the diverse student population is also a major objective. The assistant superintendent has spearheaded an effort which involves the Equity Academy in looking at the reasons for low achievement by minority students. A committee has selected three options for training that all staff in the district will be required to attend.

Other concerns include additional staff training in adapting curriculum, with particular emphasis in grades 4-12 where curriculum requirements are demanding; coping with the problem of educating a highly transient population of LEP stu-

dents; and familiarizing teachers with the concept of a "silent period" in second language learning (Dulay, Burt, and Krashen, 1982). Often teachers assume a child is not talking because of shyness or a defiant attitude. Teachers need to understand that many second language learners go through a prolonged silent period when they are absorbing a lot of language but are not yet ready to express themselves and that, of course, this period varies greatly in different students.

General Recommendations

Overall, the English Acquisition Program appears to be well-designed and implemented. The early evaluation of this program yielded the following recommendations which could appreciably improve the program in the next few years:

- more continuity between the programs in the elementary, middle, and high schools
- increasing curriculum adaptation and integration
- greater use of computer-assisted instruction
- refinement of student assessment procedures. The present assessment procedures are adequate but entry-level and achievement testing could be strengthened by more effective use of standardized and informal instruments, by the use of portfolios, and by experimenting with other techniques appropriate for use with the Bethlehem curriculum and the limited-English population.

Staff development is needed in all the areas outlined above and it is recommended that a long range plan for all training be prepared by the Program Coordinator. Seeking funding from Title VII under the grants for alternative programs is one option for supporting this project, although teacher training may be financed by grants from other foundations.

ON-SITE EVALUATIONS AT ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Curriculum adaptation is done consistently in the primary grades due to the close collaboration between ESOL teaches and classroom teachers. In order to assure the language minority students' fullest participation in classroom activities and their ability to comprehend grade appropriate content, teachers use a wide variety of instructional strategies in both the ESOL classrooms and regular self-contained classrooms.

In general, a child-centered approach was used that actively involved students in meaningful, hands-on activities combined with skills instruction when appropriate. Skills instruction took place individually, in small groups, and in whole group activities. Among the strategies observed most frequently were Total Physical

Response (TPR) instruction, employing multiple modalities, cooperative learning activities, and computer-assisted instruction.

The literature-based reading series involves the integrated use of the four language skills--reading, writing, speaking and listening comprehension--an optimal approach for second language learners. Some teachers integrate other content area curriculum objectives around the themes of authentic children's literature, rather than the less natural and often contrived basal reading series stories. While some of the teachers were more comfortable than others in implementing the integrated curriculum approach and adapting curriculum to meet the need of LEP students, the total number of teachers observed and interviewed who use the integrated adapted curriculum approach extensively or consistently is not large at this time. Additional training will make teachers more knowledgeable and confident in using this approach.

While it might be argued that this training should have been given prior to the implementation of the English Acquisition Program, it should be taken into consideration that the majority of teachers in the district had not had extensive experience with whole language or with language minority students before 1993. It is more likely that after two years of experience with these students, they have come to recognize their special characteristics and understand their own needs for further training.

Computers are used in every regular elementary classroom, as well as ESOL classrooms. While it appears that most classes are using software programs as reinforcement for English and academic concepts taught as enrichment for students who were advanced in their progress or simply as a word processing program to enhance the writing and publishing program outlined in the whole language series, the technology program at the Freemansburg Elementary School was truly an exemplary model that could be adopted elsewhere.

Teacher Rita Hatton, for example, has developed a classroom rich in speaking and writing activities, and uses a variety of software programs to introduce, practice and reinforce English language learning. Especially noteworthy is Mrs. Hatton's adaptation of the Apple Early Language Program (Apple, 1992) for use with her students. Recently, Mrs. Hatton was awarded a grant of $10,000 to expand her computer-assisted instruction approach to include a component that will enhance language minority parents' ability to help their children on home assignments such as the writing of an autobiography.

A broader based application of computer-assisted instruction in all classrooms modeled upon the program at the Freemansburg Elementary School would be one approach to curriculum adaptation that would be effective not only in the primary grades but in the middle school grades and high school. A more sophisticated computer-assisted instructional program might assist teachers in solving the problem of transitory students joining the class throughout the school year with an appropriate span of graded materials for different ability levels allowing newcomers to work individually on essential skills without disrupting normal classroom activities.

It is sometimes necessary to provide appropriate materials for the child who may be well behind the level of the other LEP students in the class. The development of an individualized plan for supporting these students as they strive to learn "missed" skills or survival English would facilitate the work of both ESOL teachers and regular classroom teachers across all grade levels, K-12. In the survey and interviews teachers often expressed frustration with their inability to meet the needs of these students.

Table 1 below outlines the English Acquisition Program enrollment in the elementary schools during the first two years of the program. "Students enrolled" refers to the total number of students in the English Acquisition Program enrolled in each of the districts 16 elementary schools. The next column indicates the number of students who have spent two full years in the school. The large percentage of students who come and go within one school year, or who move to another school after one year is reflected in these columns. The next four columns report the positive program changes, students who move up from beginner to intermediate, from intermediate to advanced, and from advanced to exit over the past two years of program operation.

Table 1:
English Acquisition Program Enrollment and Program Changes During the First Two Years of Program Implementation

School	Students Enrolled	Full 2 Yr. Students	Second Yr. Changes	First Yr. Changes	Total Changes	Exited
1	22	16	5	3	8	3
2	18	5	4	3	8	3
3	12	4	3	10	13	3
4	50	18	12	15	27	16
5	346	86	74	98	172	42
6	4	1	0	0	0	0
7	96	19	37	13	50	14
8	145	48	23	36	59	19
9	17	5	3	6	9	2
10	3	1	2	1	3	1
11	67	28	9	16	25	5
12	192	96	44	45	89	31
13	5	1	0	3	3	0
14	16	3	3	5	8	3
15	16	6	10	3	13	4
16	17	7	9	4	13	2

ON-SITE MIDDLE SCHOOL EVALUATION

The "buddy system" has been successful at the middle school level according to the survey responses of the teachers. While evaluators did not directly observe the buddy system in action, we agree with the teachers and administration that this activity needs to be expanded to include more training and support for the students who become "buddies" to the newer LEP students. Various extensions of the "buddy system" have been suggested and a plan for more systematic training and support of "buddies" is under way.

It was also suggested that the peer and adult mentoring recommended at the high school be extended downward into the middle school in the belief that it is easier for a sixth or seventh grader to accept the guidance of an adult mentor if the relationship begins prior to the adolescent years when students' inclinations become focused on interaction with age peers.

Training in curriculum adaptation and integration will be helpful to teachers at this level, once they have a thorough understanding of the process of acquiring a second language in relationship to other adolescent developmental changes.

It was evident in our observations that students in the middle school were more likely than the students in the elementary school to lapse into their native language when placed in cooperative learning groups. While occasional interaction in Spanish as students clarify concepts and ideas for each other is to be accepted and encouraged, it is important that students have plenty of opportunity to work in cooperative learning groups not only in the ESOL classes, but also in the regular classroom where they will be obliged to engage in meaningful communication with native English speakers more frequently. The Latino students at this age level tend to segregate themselves socially within the heterogeneously grouped classrooms. This is particularly true of the those whose English is more limited--the beginner and intermediate level students.

Middle school students would benefit from a greater amount of collaboration between the ESOL teachers and regular classroom teachers. Without such collaboration there is the tendency for ESOL teachers to engage students in grammatical drill from ESL texts or to plan lessons that oversimplify the content material. While this was certainly not the case in all middle school observations, it would be advisable, as the material becomes more abstract and sophisticated, for the ESOL teachers and regular classroom teachers to provide an even greater amount of support through vocabulary building and activation of prior knowledge to facilitate LEP students' assimilation of new material.

The issue of transitory students becomes an even greater problem at the middle school level, as there is no prescribed manner in which to address the needs of students who have attended school irregularly or who have in some cases attended as many as five schools in a single year. They seem to have very low levels of motivation and it appears that their primary goal is to leave school entirely as soon as they are old enough to do so. These students often have very limited skills in English, either because they have not had the opportunity for sustained ESL instruction in any one district or because they have lost interest in language learning due to the fact that they have been kept in beginner classes.

Special care must be given to the assessment of English proficiency at the middle school level as students at this level are more sophisticated in social discourse and are even more likely than the elementary students to appear more proficient in English than they actually are. There was some evidence of difficulties in transi-

tions between the beginning and intermediate level instruction in ESOL at the middle schools. However, this difficulty may be due to unrealistic expectations on the part of teachers as compared to the competencies outlined by the district at this level. The Program Coordinator suggested that teachers may not take note of the fact that students who progress from beginner to intermediate level mid-way through the school year will not be functioning on a level equivalent to the students who have been in the intermediate level program since the start of the school year.

Middle school teachers must come to realize the value of a more thoroughly integrated and adapted curriculum as a means of promoting cognitive academic development and for reducing the likelihood of learning difficulties among LEP students. Unfortunately, there have been no studies to date to compare the progress of limited-English students in an integrated curriculum with those receiving traditional teaching. Computer-assisted instruction should be explored as one approach to curriculum issues. A computer resource center based on the high school model where each student spends one period per day using special materials that parallel course content would be a useful consideration for future planning.

Recognizing that this age group is difficult to work with at times, it is recommended that a team of teachers explore the idea of 10 week courses on themes which would be of high interest to language minority students as well as other early adolescents. These themes might vary from practical ones (consumerism - "How to keep from getting ripped off") to more abstract topics that lend themselves easily to more typical content learning ("war", "water", "color") which could be team taught.

Workbooks are still overly used, despite the advice of ESOL teachers that it is best to use other materials. Training on how and when to use the ESOL texts and how to adapt the text to the general content curriculum could reduce the tendency for over-reliance on workbooks.

ON-SITE OBSERVATION IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

Many of Bethlehem's limited-English students clearly demonstrated their ability to function in college preparatory classes. The majority of teachers at the high school understand the needs of language minority students and are supportive of their cognitive development. However, as in the elementary and middle school, there is a considerable degree of variability in the degree to which curriculum is adapted and ESOL techniques are used in the regular classroom. It is apparent that the district has some very professional and dedicated teachers, many of

whom have the ability to synthesize curriculum and materials effectively for their LEP students; others will need training to acquire these skills.

It must be recognized that the students presently matriculating at the middle schools and high school were, for the most part, in the previous bilingual program or are newcomers to the district, consequently their school achievement cannot be credited to the effects of the new program. It can be said, however, that the students observed by the evaluators appeared to have experienced no negative effects due to the program change that has taken place. The evaluators hope to conduct focus group interviews with some of these students during the 1995-1996 school year to survey students' impressions of the English Acquisition Program, and the impact of the program change on them as far as academic achievement and social integration. Such information will be useful to other districts that are planning program changes of the sort that Bethlehem has implemented.

The computer resource room should become an increasingly useful source of academic support for language minority students as more teachers become more knowledgeable in their uses of software programs. Observations of limited-English students assigned to work in this room during study halls revealed the potential for creativity on the part of the students in using the various programs available.

Observations and interviews indicate that the usefulness and quality of texts is limited. A reconsideration of texts is in order, to determine which texts are really effective in ESOL instruction and how selected texts support learning in the content areas.

PRELIMINARY DATA ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Preliminary evaluation of data on the progress of students from one English language level to the next indicates promising results (see Table 1). Kindergarten students are evaluated based on oral language proficiency only, while students in the first through twelfth grades are evaluated for oral language, reading and writing proficiencies. Typical newcomer beginner level students are rated as being at stage 1 in oral proficiency in English, stage 1 in reading, and stage 1 in writing. Typical intermediate level students are rated as 3-4 in oral proficiency, 3 in reading, and 2-3 in writing. (See description of English learning stages in Appendix A.)

Review of the students who entered kindergarten in the 1993-1994 school year, the first year of implementation of the English Acquisition Program, found the following:

1. Sixty students of the original 90 are still attending school in the district

2. Thirty-two percent of the sixty moved up to the next program level

3. Fifteen percent moved up two program levels (from beginner to advanced, or intermediate to exit)

4. Ten percent moved down to a lower program level because of limited skills in reading and writing (the lower levels provide more support services by the ESOL teachers)

5. Ten percent of the original sixty exited the program (upon entrance three of these exited students were beginners, and three were intermediate level students)

6. Forty-five percent of the original group of students are still at the same program level, but demonstrated an average of 3 points growth on the scales of oral language, reading and writing. Teachers agreed that most of these students are ready to move to the higher level during the next school year, but their present placement enables them to receive the more intensive support necessary for success in the regular classroom.

As of June, 1995, analysis of data from all students in the program, grades K-12 showed that 29 percent of the students at the beginner level in the first quarter of the school year had moved to the intermediate level by June. Twelve percent of the students who were in the intermediate level the first quarter of the year had moved to the advanced level by June. Forty-six percent of the students who were classified as advanced in November had qualified to exit the program by June. The relatively lower number of intermediate students who moved up to the advanced level may be due to the wide range of proficiencies described as "intermediate," and to teacher reluctance to move the students to the advanced level where the ESOL support is substantially reduced. Once a student is at the advanced level, the likelihood is great (almost half) that he or she will exit the program within the year.

SUMMARY

Overall the Bethlehem Area School District's English Acquisition Program is an excellent example of a program that emphasizes the goal of English fluency and simultaneously provides the support that language minority students need to gain

knowledge and skills at a developmentally appropriate level while acquiring second language fluency. This program extends its support of LEP students well beyond that which is typical in structured immersion programs. The district has designed a program that is practical yet well-grounded in current theory and research.

Key factors are the close connection between this language program and the general district curriculum; an emphasis on adapting curriculum and teaching/learning strategies to facilitate academic content learning; the use of technology as a support system for English language learners; and the close collaboration between ESOL teachers and regular classroom teachers. Advance planning and teacher training were sufficient for early organization of the program. As shown by the formative evaluation, there is an on-going need for staff training and curriculum modification for the next three years at the least.

The social and political contexts of the community that could have been divisive were successfully dealt with and were sensitively handled to encourage cooperation and participation by staff, parents and community. Parents are highly supportive of this program, and therefore another priority of the district should be to build on this parental support to encourage their greater involvement in their children's education. The district could cooperate with other community agencies in coordinating efforts to develop family literacy programs. Clearly, any social services that help language minority families improve their living situation will certainly improve the educational prospects of the district's language minority students. Several ideas for pilot programs are in the planning stages in the Bethlehem district at present.

The significant amount of time and effort that is required to develop and refine an English Acquisition Program which provides continuity and quality education for language minority students should be readily apparent after reading the process and progress of the Bethlehem program to date. The development of such programs requires careful planning based on research, practical experience, context analysis and staff input. Issues such as student curriculum adaptation and integration, student progress evaluation, textbook adoption, parent involvement, and staff development are all aspects of the program that would benefit from further refinement, but it must be reiterated that the program to date as observed by the university evaluators is one that is superior in quality to many of the programs we have researched and could well be adopted by other districts.

Bethlehem demonstrates a strong dedication to its language minority students by its openness to new ideas and its willingness to commit resources to program change and improvement. The district also displays a serious concern for account-

ability in its support for rigorous program evaluation. The formative and summative evaluations started in 1993 will be carried forward in the next few years and should make a valuable contribution to the literature in the field.

What has been reported so far on the first two years of the English Acquisition Program is mainly the story of the preparation and start up process, with a minimum of information on student achievement. The crucial data on student achievement over time will be reported with much more detail in each of the next five to ten years. It is these data that are awaited with great interest. It is the hope of the authors of this article that other school districts will be encouraged to develop English learning programs like Bethlehem's and that they will document their results carefully and disseminate them freely, as Bethlehem is doing. The information gained from such endeavors will be valuable to the many additional school districts that will in future need to accommodate to the rapidly growing population of limited-English students. Such information will be valuable in planning education programs that will give future teachers a strong preparation in the theory and practices required to meet the needs of language minority students in the 21st century.

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APPENDIX A

Stages of English Language Acquisition for Oral/Aural, Reading, and Writing Development (June, 1993)

(Adapted from Fairfax County, Virginia Communicative Stages in Second Language Acquisition)

Stages are not exact points but describe a continuum from the beginning of a stage to the upper limit of a stage. An occasional non-English word is acceptable at the higher stages. An accent is acceptable at all stages.

Oral/Aural Language Stages in English

STAGE 1:

Understands little or no English.
Uses no English except for a word or two.
Names objects.

STAGE 2:

Understands only slow simple speech; requires repetitions.
Speech is slow except for short patterns.
Is able to use functional words and phrases.
Is unable to use English for significant communication.
Vocabulary is limited to basic personal and survival areas.

STAGE 3:

Understands simplified speech with repetitions and rephrasing.
Speech is hesitant and uneven; some sentences left incomplete.
Uses simple speech and gestures with predominantly present tense verbs.
Demonstrates errors of omission; leaves words out; leaves endings off.
Vocabulary is limited preventing continuous conversation.

STAGE 4:

Understands adult speech but requires repetition and rephrasing.
Speech may be hesitant because of rephrasing and groping for words.
Uses some complex structures.
Overgeneralizes rules of grammar.
Has difficulty with choice of verb tense, verb tense consistency, and subject/verb agreement.
Vocabulary is adequate to carry on basic conversation; some word usage difficulties.

STAGE 5:

Understands most adult speech except some advanced structures.

Responds in detail, often with hesitations or digressions that do not impede narrative.

Errors made are not uncommon among proficient speakers of standard American English and do not distract from story line.

Uses most basic grammatical structures with occasional error in syntax. Some errors in a young learner may be seen as developmental.

Vocabulary is sufficiently varied to express ideas clearly.

STAGE 6:

Able to express themselves adequately to succeed in a regular education program with no ESOL support.

Reading Stages in English

STAGE 1:

Attends to pictures and objects, but not print.

STAGE 2:

Beginning to understand conventions of print such as reading from left to right and the concepts of letters and words.

STAGE 3:

Participates in choral reading activities and/or can identify some sound/symbol relationships along with some high frequency words.

STAGE 4:

Decodes simple sentences without assistance but may not associate meaning.

STAGE 5:

Reads some words and simple sentences without assistance and is able to retell the meaning of a simple passage.

STAGE 6:

Uses reading strategies to understand main ideas appropriate to the student's grade level, but may need ESOL support to understand more advanced concepts.

STAGE 7:

Demonstrates reading ability appropriate to succeed in a regular education program with decreasing ESOL support.

STAGE 8:

Demonstrates reading ability appropriate to succeed in a regular education program with ESOL support only as needed.

Writing Stages in English

STAGE 1:

Draws a picture.

Has no knowledge of the written word.

Writes name only.

Writes isolated letters or words only.

STAGE 2:

Writes in phrases and simple patterned sentences only.

Uses limited vocabulary, and mostly present tense verbs.

May use temporary spellings.

STAGE 3:

Writes concrete description of a picture/idea commensurate with the student's oral ability.

Writes sentences centered around one idea, but not necessarily in sequential order with errors, but commensurate with student's oral ability.

Has some knowledge of rules of punctuation and capitalization, but may not use them consistently.

Uses spellings which are readable.

STAGE 4:

Has story line and/or central idea present.

Able to write a summary of a story in correct sequence.

Shows sequential relationship between sentences.

Uses some compound and complex sentences.

Demonstrates general control of most basic grammatical structures, (e.g., subject/verb agreement, standard word order, consistent verb tense), but still contains errors.

Uses punctuation and capitalization correctly most of the time.

Uses some conventional spellings.

STAGE 5:

Demonstrates writing ability appropriate to succeed in a regular education program with ESOL support only as needed.

ENGLISH ACQUISITION STAGE

	ELEMENTARY				MIDDLE				HIGH			
	Beg.	Int.	Adv.	Comp.	Beg.	Int.	Adv.	Comp.	Beg.	Int.	Adv.	Comp.
Oral/Aural	1 2 3	3 4	4 5	5 6	1 2 3	3 4	4 5	5 6	1 2 3	3 4	4 5	6
Reading	1 2 3 4	4 5	5 6	7 8	3 4 5	6	6 7	7 8	1 2 3 4 5	6	6 7	6 7 8
Writing	1 2	2 3	3	4 5	1 2 3	3	4	4 5	1 2 3	3 4	4	5 6

APPENDIX B

Bethlehem Area School District Secondary Program of Studies

EAP and TEP are 2 strands of the high school program for limited-English students: TEP is the program for college bound students; EAP is oriented towards students pursuing the vocational and commercial tracks.

EAP I - Grades 9-10

2pds. Composition/Reading Development
2pds. Oral Language Development
1pd. Keyboarding (2nd semester)
1pd. EAP 1 Math
1pd. English Acquisition Resource Room
1pd. Physical Education/Elective

EAP 2 - Grades 10-11

lpd. EAP 2 English Language Development
1pd. EAP 2 Life Science
lpd. EAP World Geography
1pd. English Acquisition Resource Room
3pds. Vo-tech/Business classes
1pd. Physical Education/Elective/Keyboarding

EAP 3 - Grades 10-12

1pd. EAP 3 English Language Development
1pd. EAP 3 Science
1pd. EAP World Geography
1pd. English Acquisition Resource Room
3pds. Vo-Tech/Business Classes
All other classes in the regular program.

EAP 4 - Grades 10-12

1pd. English Language Development
1pd. English Acquisition Resource Room
3pds. Vo-Tech/Business Classes (or in reg. prog.)

TEP 1 - Grades 9-10

2pds. Composition/Reading Development
2pds. Oral Language Development
1pd. English Acquisition Resource Room
1pd. Keyboarding (First Semester)

1pd. Mathematics (EAP 1 Math or from transcript
1pd. Physical Education/Elective

TEP 2 - Grades 9-11

3pds. English Language Development
1pd. TEP 2 Science Concepts
1pd. TEP 2 Social Studies Concepts
1pd. English Acquisition Resource Room
All other classes are in the mainstream.

TEP 3 - Grades 9-12

1pd. Transitional English
1pd. English 9B
1pd. Content Area Reading
1pd. TEP Government/Economics
1pd. TEP Physical Science
1pd. English Acquisition Resource Room
All other classes are in the mainstream.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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READ The Institute for Research in English Acquisition and Development

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